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THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR®

JULY 1988 A MONTHLY REVIEW EDITED BY R. EMMETT TYRRELL, JR.

Brit Hume on David Brinkley

Victor Gold on Roy Cohn

Micah Morrison, Gregory Fossedal:
George Bush and the Reaganite Angst

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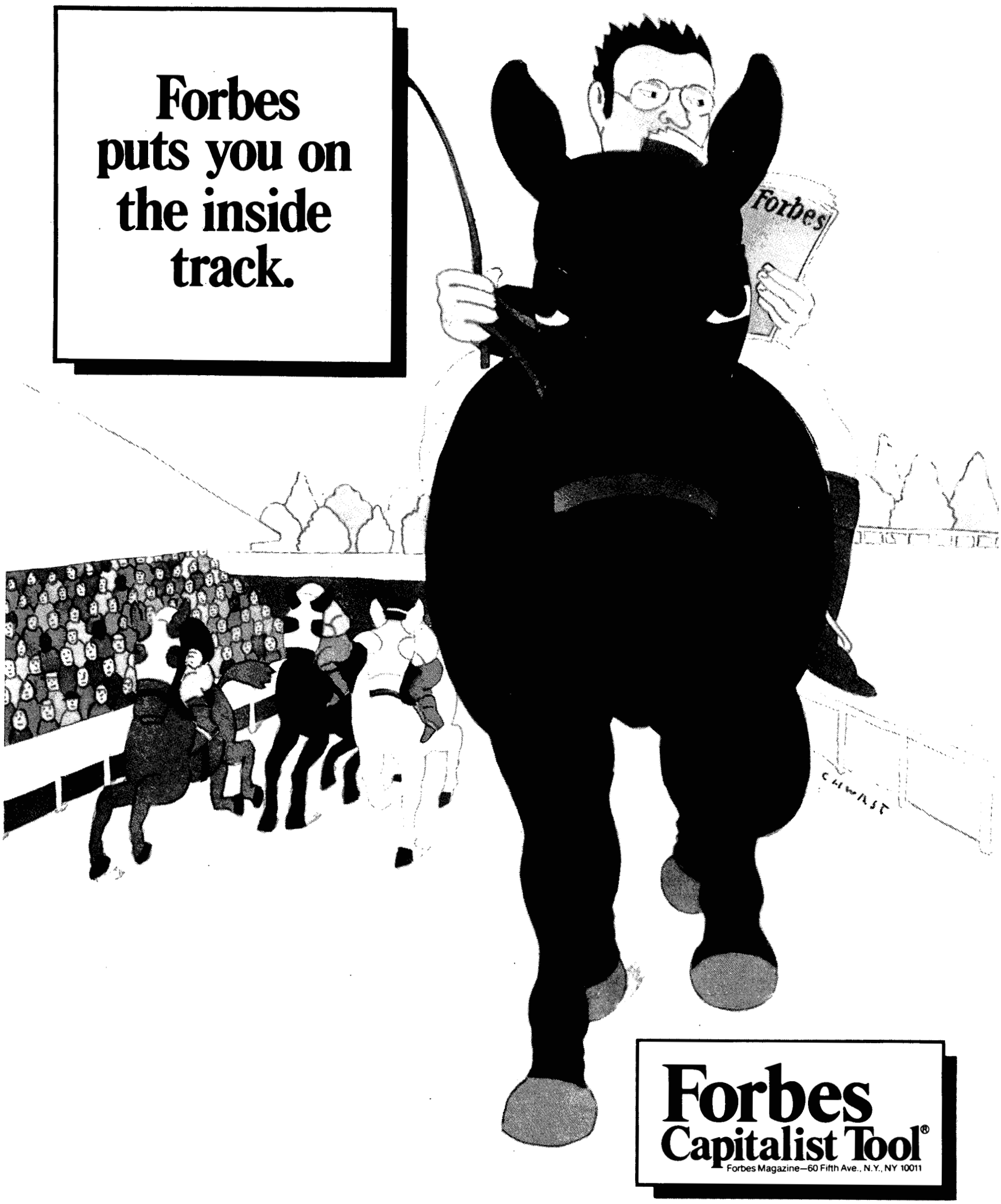

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Once again, strife and trouble have erupted in Israel and in the territories administered by Israel. And many thoughtful people believe that these problems could be laid to rest, that tranquility could be restored if the "Palestinians" had their own country. That homeland would be Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the Gaza strip. Its capital would be Jerusalem or, at the very least, its "Arab sector."

What are the facts?

■ First of all, some definitions are in order. The Arabs living in "Palestine" — which is Jordan, Israel and the areas administered by Israel — like to refer to themselves as "Palestinians", and to the Jews living there as "Jews". But all inhabitants of Palestine obviously are Palestinians — either Arab or Jewish Palestinians. By only referring to themselves, but not to the Jews, as "Palestinians", the Arabs attempt to convey legitimacy on themselves and illegitimacy on the Jews, despite the uninterrupted presence of Jews in all parts of Palestine since Biblical times.

■ In 1948, the Palestinian state of Jordan, in an act of naked agression, invaded the just-born state of Israel. It managed to occupy Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and the eastern part of Jerusalem. For the next 19 years, and until 1967 when the territory came under Israeli administration after the Six-Day War, Judea/Samaria was part of the Kingdom of Jordan. During that entire time, nothing was ever heard of "Palestinian" peoplehood. The thought of creating a second "Palestinian" state in the "West Bank", in addition to the Palestinian state of Jordan, did not occur to anyone — certainly not to the "Palestinians", not to any of the 22 Arab countries, and not to the rest of the world.

■ By the relentless drumbeat of Arab propaganda, the impression has taken hold that the "Palestinians" in Judea/Samaria are a distinct and unique people. But that just isn't so. The concept of separate "Palestinian" peoplehood is a new one. It did not exist before 1967. The reality is that the so-called "Palestinians" in this area are exactly the same people — undifferentiated in dialect, dress, social customs or anything else — from the Palestinian Arabs in Jordan. A second Palestinian peoplehood is a myth. It was created for the purpose of laying claim to Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") in the first instance, and for its use as a launching pad for the destruction of Israel proper thereafter.

■ With the help of President Carter, Menachem Begin of Israel and Anwar Sadat of Egypt signed the Camp David Accords. In line with these Accords, Israel returned the entire Sinai Peninsula — including the valuable oil fields it had developed, two of the world's most advanced military bases, and several cities — to Egypt, in exchange for peace. And in the Camp David Accords it was agreed that the inhabitants of Judea/Samaria and the Gaza Strip would get autonomy and that during a five-year period, the final status of the territories would be negotiated. But that process never got started. Why not? To the Arabs, the Camp David Agreement is unacceptable, because it implies recognition of Israel. The Egyptians were drummed out of the Arab League, and most Arab countries broke relations with them, for having committed the unpardonable sin of making peace with Israel. For good measure, Anwar Sadat was assassinated by his own countrymen — a destiny shared with any other Arab who has dared to advocate recognition of or peace with Israel.

■ The real and never changing purpose of the Arabs is not the attainment of "the rights of the Palestinian people", autonomy in the administered territories, or even a state of their own in what is now called the "West Bank". The real purpose has never changed. It is the dismantling and the destruction of the state of Israel. To the Arabs, having a state of "infidels" on what they consider "sacred Arab soil" is a religious crime. Because of that, the Kurds, the Druze, the Copts, the Armenians, the Maronites and other minorities have all been brutally repressed and periodically massacred by the Moslem Arabs. But the Arabs' greatest hatred is directed toward the Jews. The wished-for establishment of a "Palestinian" state on the "West Bank" would be the first step toward the "final solution" desired by the Arabs. The PLO has never deviated, never wavered from that. The destruction of Israel, its "secularization" or its Lebanonization, are the unswerving core dogma of the PLO.

The "Palestinians" are not a distinct people. They are simply Arabs. They chafe under Israeli administration, however benevolent it may be. Scores of ethnic groups live under such conditions, many of them — in contrast to the Arabs under Israeli administration — under political duress, discrimination against them, and with their religion, language and identity suppressed. But the Palestinian Arabs do have a homeland. It's Jordan. Jordan is by far the largest part of Palestine. The Arabs living there are overwhelmingly Palestinians. The ultimate resolution of the problems of the Palestinian Arabs of the "West Bank" — a resolution that satisfies the irreducible security requirements of Israel and the national aspirations of the Palestinian Arabs — can only come about by direct negotiations. Under pressure of the PLO and of Arab rejectionists, the Palestinian Arabs have so far refused to participate in any such negotiations. Israel has been ready for them for over twenty years.

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THE CONTINUING CRISIS

•One of the soggiest Mays on record has elapsed, but as the rains abate and the summer sun glints over the horizon, hope rises that at last America has another Gandhi, a replacement for the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., and in sync with the times—for this replacement is a woman! The candidate is Miss Tawana Brawley. She and her unscotchable advisers—the Rev. Al Sharpton and her lawyer, Mr. C. Vernon Mason—are making a heroic stand against the entire New York state power structure. Miss Brawley, as all conscientious Americans will recall, is the teenage black girl whom several white men raped, enscribed with racial slogans, encrusted in canine manure, and left in a common garbage bag on November 28 in Wappingers Falls, New York. Miss Brawley's lawyer, ably abetted by the pious Rev. Sharpton, simply will not allow the crime to go unpunished; and now they have uncovered evidence that despite his vaunted liberalism, Governor Mario Cuomo has confected an elaborate cover-up utilizing the vast resources of the Ku Klux Klan, the Irish Republican Army, organized crime, and *Commentary* magazine. Yes, our agents tell us that the Rev. Sharpton could soon divulge that *Commentary* magazine, the well-known neoconservative organ, has an agreement to supply Wappingers Falls' rapists with the specially treated dog manure used by them to complete their discreditable acts of sexual congress. Doubtless in time the Rev. Sharpton will divulge the names of those who supply Wappingers Falls' rapists with their requisite garbage bags, but for now neither the redoubtable Miss Brawley nor her venerable Mum will participate in Attorney General Robert Abrams's grand jury proceedings, for as Mr. Mason declaimed on May 24, "We say to all New York, 'Bob Abrams, you cannot come with an illegal subpoena to an illegal grand jury that's set up to cover up the dirty, bloody tracks of these perpetrators. You can't come with that because just like Rosa Parks, Dr. King, Gandhi shut that whole system down, today we're saying No.' " It is about time that someone had the guts to say it!

•On May 14 Miss Sarina R. di Bonaventura and Mr. Philip Steven Birsh were married in a private ceremony at the Greentree estate of Mrs. John Hay Whitney. Miss di Bonaventura, the great-granddaughter of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his lovely wife Eleanor, was until recently a secretary at Columbia Artists Management in charge of the coffeemaker. Mr. Birsh is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Birsh. In Monrovia, Liberia, police have broken up another ritual murder ring, this one involving six people who hoped to procure better political jobs by finishing off two young boys. The Food and Drug Administration reported on May 11 that fewer defective condoms are showing up on the United States market and none contained defects that are life-threatening.

•In London the British government announced a massive campaign against an outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy that turns theretofore docile cows into "raging beasts." Unfortunately, the government does not intend to extend the campaign to include the large herds of upper-class English girls who enter the U.S. every month manifesting precisely these symptoms. Polish labor unrest extended through much of the month, and the Pope spent twelve days on a four-nation visit to South America where he inadvertently effected a row between himself and General Alfredo Stroessner, Paraguay's leader, by letting slip an impolite observation about the General's boots.

•Governor Mary Lou Dukakis's daughter, Andrea, vivacious and looking for all the world as though she had just had a top-of-the-line electrolysis servicing, notified the citizenry of California from the steps of the San Francisco City Hall that until some time in May "My father did half the housework and half the cleaning" plus all the grocery shopping. On May 12 President Ronald Reagan announced at a Republican fundraising dinner that he will support George Bush despite Miss Dukakis's testimonial to her father's mastery of domestic policies. Five days later Attorney General Edwin Meese revealed a major cause of the looming conservative crack-up by dismissing his enormously able spokesman, Mr. Terry Eastland, a frequent contributor to this journal. Simply put, Mr. Meese's generation of conservatives does not have much appreciation for the younger generation that will live to write the older generation's biographies.

•In San Diego, California, Judge J. Morgan Lester was badly bruised when a porta-potty erupted beneath him. The Judge, having taken a break from jogging, entered the facility without authorization and was relieving himself when a forklift raised the porta-potty and hauled it and the intruder a short but painful distance. In New York City, Miss Jean Benes died when her companion of two years, Mr. Milton Eberenz, folded her into a convertible bed and simply had done with her foul disposition. Mr. Eberenz is charged with second-degree manslaughter. In Deer Park, Long Island, Mr. Thomas Jefferson was arrested for setting his girlfriend's bed afire while she was recumbent upon it. Mr. Alger Hiss's memoirs have been published. He calls them *Recollections of a Life.* Mr. Kim Philby died in Moscow, alas, of natural causes; and the Maryland farm of Mr. Whittaker Chambers was declared a national historical landmark by the patriotic interior secretary, the Hon. Don Hodel.

•Mr. Pete Rose, manager of the Cincinnati Reds, received a thirty-day suspension and $10,000 fine for crudities directed at an insentient umpire. The government announced that unemployment dropped to a fourteen-year low in April, and various national polls gave Governor Dukakis a 10-13 point lead over the principal passenger in Air Force Two. Britain's Press Council ruled that newspapers may with impunity refer to homosexuals as "poofs" and "poofters." The Associated Press reports that a Madison, Wisconsin man accused of exposing his private parts to women while posing as an underwear model has been convicted of three counts of lewd and lascivious behavior and four counts of trespassing. The culprit's name was not included in the report, but Madison is the home of the *Progressive* magazine, and reasonable readers can conclude that one of that magazine's editorialists has again been up to his old tricks. What is more, there may be a few *Progressive* writers in retirement in Hudson, Florida, for there an outbreak of robberies perpetrated by nude thieves has struck terror among retirees. Most recently a convenience store was robbed of three lottery tickets, cigarettes, and a lighter by a man wearing gray bikini briefs on his head and gray socks on his hands.

•In Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Cajuns were added to the state's growing list of officially designated minorities over the vociferous objections of fuliginous state legislators. The World Health Organization has honored Cuba's chief jailer, Mr. Fidel Castro, for giving up his cigar and setting a "smoke-free example" for his countrymen similar to that set in this country by the tiresome Dr. C. Everett Koop, Surgeon General of the United States, who early in the month declared nicotine an addictive drug. Four hundred Missouri bullfrogs shipped to England to scare off cats

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from country-house ponds were recalled when environmentalists raised another of their inscrutable complaints. Australian health authorities denounced the toad-slime cocktail, an hallucinogenic potion created by the infamous Hippies of Brisbane from the skin of the cane toad. Karl A. Wittfogel, the social scientist who after his 1939 break with Communism distinguished himself as one of its most scholarly critics, died, as did Mr. Morris (Red) Rudensky and Mrs. Bernadette K. Devine. •Former White House Chief of Staff Mr. Donald Regan gave new meaning to the Reagan Administration's term Star Wars when he revealed in his kiss-and-tell memoirs Mrs. Nancy Reagan's interest in astrology; and on the very day that Mr. Regan's revelation became known Mr. Carroll Righter, the syndicated astrologist, expired—a fact to conjure with. In Los Angeles, California, gourmands who delight in that city's delicacies were put on alert when Mr. George Jimenez, 26, was sentenced to a month in the hoosegow for baking his wife's six-week-old kitten in a microwave. In April Miss Guadelupe O. Rodriguez, 25, also of Los Angeles, was charged with felonious animal cruelty for incinerating her boyfriend's parrot in a conventional oven. There is an alarming trend here, and it does not bode well for Los Angeles cuisine. On May 15, Soviet troops began to depart Afghanistan, and on May 28 President Reagan began his fourth summit with Mikhail Gorbachev. Finally, Mr. David Nelson, a student at Chicago's Art Institute, achieved the limits of art when at a school exhibition he displayed his portrait of the late Mayor Harold Washington clad in lingerie. Black leaders were enraged. Police confiscated the portrait. The fearless defenders of art who administer the Art Institute apologized in newspaper ads, and only the American Civil Liberties Union came to Mr. Nelson's defense.

—RET

CORRESPONDENCE

Does the Pope Love America?

To those of us who equate the idea of moral equivalence between democracy and Communism with moral obtuseness, the encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, is difficult to understand, let alone defend. That Reid Buckley even attempts to defend this document is itself an accomplishment that I must admire ("Does the Pope Love America?" *TAS*, May 1988). I also agree with Buckley that the only way this statement by John Paul can be defended is to see it as a message that is not concerned with our lives here on this earth but with "that breach in being through which our transcendent destiny is revealed to us." In this context, one in which we are summoned to "sanctity," no political system is adequate, and consequently, the sharp differences between East and West are ultimately irrelevant.

But if the Pope's teaching is interpreted in this way, as a manifestation of Christ's dictum that our true kingdom is not of this world, then the encyclical is itself irrelevant whenever it criticizes the economic policies of the West. A religious statement that is dedicated to having us transcend our "base nature" cannot expect also to tell us what political and economic policies we should follow, since these policies and systems are designed to accommodate natural man.

Religious leaders have, of course, recognized this dilemma, and have modified Christianity so as to have Christ's kingdom embrace this world as well as the next world. But in doing so, in accepting religion as immanent as well as being transcendent, the Christian religion has had to defend its statements in the same way as other statements: by reason based in human experience. Consequently, those statements in the encyclical that deal with political and economic issues must be judged by the same criteria as secular statements. And to the extent that *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* suggests that there is little difference between Communism and capitalist democracy, the Pope's statement should be condemned by anyone who is not sympathetic to Communism—including, of course, Reid Buckley.

Even a debater who is as clever as Buckley cannot have it both ways: If the encyclical is to be relevant to our political life, the Pope is wrong in some important ways. If, however, we accept Buckley's interpretation, and see the encyclical as essentially a call to religious transcendence, then the encyclical has nothing to say to our political questions—and Buckley's victory is not one that John Paul would appreciate.

—Lawrence W. Hyman
Ridgewood, New Jersey

That many Americans care more about their ski trips and cars than about the state of their souls is manifest. We are a soft people, willing to watch allies be consumed by an Evil Empire to the East, looking the other way while our unborn are wiped out, impassive as our society buckles from vicious crime and sexual perversion.

Conservatives, particularly conservative Catholics, spend much of their time thinking about these abominations. But with all our cogitating, I don't think I know anyone who has ever come up with a gem like this: "The cause of these evils is our economic system."

Indeed, when the likes of Cardinal Joseph Bernardin lecture us on morality and capitalism, we naturally defend our system—and demand to know why the Chicago liberal doesn't focus on the *real* causes of our moral decay. Yet when even sterner lectures come from Rome, conservative Catholics exhibit a softness all their own.

And it isn't because most of them regard the Pope's latest socio-economic treatise as infallible (some pietists do, admittedly). Most realize that prescriptions for world exchange-rate reforms, or phenomenological discourses about "underdevelopment," don't fall under the divine guarantee.

No, conservatives get puppy-like about John Paul II because he's a Pole and suffered under Communism. (Why *that* is so bad now escapes me; it is, after all, merely one of two Structures of Sin.) He was also probably the victim of a KGB plot, and he opposes the killing of innocents. I like him for that too.

But would someone please explain why many of the Catholic right's best minds shrug—or endorse him—when John Paul attacks our economic system root and branch? They didn't shrug at Bernardin and Company. They told him, indignantly, that the fire was three miles down the road.

I'd trade our economic system and its fruits for a morally healthy society with a klutzy, Wojtyla-like system. (Where he'd pay for his ski trips and indoor pool without American Catholic dollars in that case is anybody's guess—as would be the source of funds for that incredible Vatican deficit, which is far worse than any but the most disreputable government's.) But isn't it crazy to address our moral decay with a call for structural economic reform?

—Roger A. McCaffrey
Ridgefield, Connecticut

Reid Buckley's piece, if I may be so bold, got so wound up in the fine print that it missed the key point of the Pope's encyclical—the political impact. My Catholic training tells me that England was a sinful society in 1940. Yet if Pius XII had started hurling anathemas at Churchill while Hitler was at the gates, that would have been inexcusable. For the Pope who bear-baited in Poland, chased Cardinal O'Connor out of Jerusalem, and elevated Mgr. Obando y Bravo, to pretend otherworldliness when the evidence indicates otherwise is plain irresponsible. On the other hand, that silly grin he wore when snapped at his shameful meeting with Arafat was eerily Carterish, so maybe the poor chap is, as the French say, "un peu detraque!"

—John Poulin
Flin Flon, Manitoba
Canada

"... A good ole boy, associating intimately only with two other divine males ..." responsible for "... legitimated religious bigotry, racism, classism, imperialism, clericalism, and all the other isms you can think of ...." This insight was reported in the religious press as an observation on the Holy and Undivided Trinity by the distinguished Roman Catholic theologian, Sister Madonna Kolbenschlag.

In Reid Buckley's article "Does The Pope Love America?" he explains that John Paul II can't approve of us because we are "a philosophically corrupted society." The Holy Father could contribute mightily to our regeneration by cleaning out the polluted metaphysics, epistemology, and morality which flourishes in that odd ecclesiastical entity "the American Catholic Church."

—The Reverend Roland Thorwaldsen
Rector, St. Stephen's Church
Beaumont, California

Reid Buckley replies:

Regarding Rev. Thorwaldsen's letter: something can be polluted only if an agent contaminates and thus transmogrifies its essential character—as, say, the rotting cadaver a pure spring well. Such as Sister Madonna Kolbenschlag may disgrace their Order; they pollute only themselves. The metaphysics, epistemology, and morality of the *Catholic* Church remain untouched.

Regarding Mr. Poulin's letter: comparing the U.S. (or the West's) political situation today with England's vis-a-vis Nazi Germany in 1940 strains mightily. Nor would the point of the comparison be relevant, even if it were apt. Just as the Pope is not (solely) a temporal ruler, he is not (solely) a "states-

(continued on page 49)

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EDITORIALS

MOSCOW AND BLISS

by R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev has been a stupendous euphoriant for leaders of the industrial West. His stewardship of the Soviet Union has conferred a sense of general well-being even on Ronald Reagan. Among leaders of stature only Henry Kissinger and Richard Nixon remain vigilant about the future of Soviet-American relations. For the rest the future is Moscow and bliss. One senses in Washington these days a profound weariness toward difficult questions of foreign policy. Yet let Gorbachev suffer an embarrassment—say, civil war in Afghanistan a month or two hence—and he could be replaced overnight by saber-rattlers.

There is growing evidence that Mr. Gorbachev's political career may end before President Reagan's. Mr. Gorbachev may appear suave and cunning to Westerners, but in his efforts to reform a totalitarian system seven decades old he may be out of his depth. Given the Marxist blight on the Soviet mind it is eminently possible that as a reformer Mr. Gorbachev is an innocent—as unaware of the complexity of reforming the Soviet Union in the 1980s as, say, the boy mayor of New York, John V. Lindsay, was of reforming New York City in the 1960s. Gorbachev is up against the inflexible laws of bureaucracy and economics and the passions of aggrieved colleagues and hostile enemies. When he was off reading Marx he might better have been reading the sociologist Max Weber and the capitalist economists.

Gorbachev is now beleaguered by three sets of problems that are most likely beyond his understanding. To begin with, his polyglot empire is being sorely pressed by its hive of nationalities all buzzing with discontent toward Moscow. Gorbachev has had to face disturbances in the Baltic, in Kazakhstan, and among the Crimean Tatars. In the Caucasus, according to *Soviet Analyst*, a respected newsletter on Soviet events, so disruptive have Armenian nationalists become that the Soviet authorities "are uncertain how to proceed on the question of the nationalities." Disturbances among the nationalities continue to spread.

Gorbachev's second set of problems hiss and smolder in Eastern Europe. There the very policies of *perestroika* and *glasnost* that Gorbachev champions for his country are being used by Eastern European nationalists to challenge Soviet influence. This cannot endear Gorbachev to the henchmen Moscow relies on to preserve Soviet power. In Poland during the recent unrest Lech Walesa actually invoked the sacred word "perestroika" on behalf of Polish strikers. How do you suppose the dictator Jaruzelski liked that?

Finally, within the Soviet elite there is increasing displeasure with the turbulence that has followed upon Gorbachev's reforms. Advocates of change as well as hardened stand-patters yearn for a more productive economy, the better to strengthen the Soviet military; but Soviet agelasts, whether they be bureaucrats in Moscow or plant managers in the boondocks, are discovering to their displeasure that economic reform means loss of privilege. Moreover, party bosses, KGB officials, and military officers are discovering that they are in danger of losing not only privileges but also the power to control. KGB head Viktor Chebrikov and Defense Minister Dmitri Yazov have publicly expressed skepticism over the drift of events under Gorbachev. These are not the kind of enemies one wants under the Soviet system.

Now comes news that, though Gorbachev had led many to believe that the Soviets' 300-member Central Committee would get many new faces after the June party conference, the changes will be few. Apparently Gorbachev's allies in the countryside had been sounding the alarm that opponents of his "new thought" might dominate the conference. Fearing the worst, the learned Dr. Andrei Sakharov even suggested that it be postponed. It is time to recognize that the Soviet world is approaching a period of instability and danger for the West, not bliss. □

Adapted from RET's weekly Washington Post *column syndicated by King Features.*

A QUESTION OF HONOR

Well, let's see, here we are in our sixty-seventh straight month of economic growth, and we endure yet another dreadful squall over this President's leadership. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that unemployment has fallen to 5.4 percent—the lowest rate in fourteen years. Corporate profits rose 24 percent in the first quarter. Inflation, which reached 18.2 percent in the Carter Administration, is a modest 4.2 percent, and productivity rises. Martin Anderson of the Hoover Institution, in his refreshing new book about his experiences in the Reagan Administration, *Revolution*,[1] notes that during the Reagan years "more wealth and services were produced than in any like period in history."

America seems to be flourishing. Crime has fallen, longevity increases, and along comes Donald Regan, the President's disgruntled former chief of staff, asserting in a 397-page White House memoir that "virtually every major move and decision the Reagans made during my time as White House Chief of Staff was cleared in advance with a woman in San Francisco who drew up horoscopes to make certain that the planets were in favorable alignment for the enterprise." Am I the only American who would very much like to have that woman's telephone number? Reports indicate that her name is Joan Quigley, and unfortunately for Governor Michael Dukakis she is a Republican. If she promises to advise George Bush as judiciously as she has advised Mrs. Reagan, my guess is that this fall all down-to-earth Americans will unite to give him a tremendous majority.

[1]Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, $19.95.

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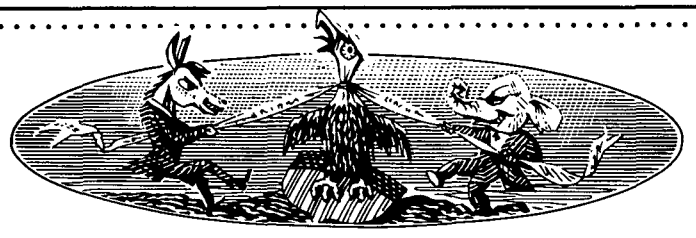
Frankly, hitherto astrology never fetched me. It had been my view that the arrangement of the planets overhead would hold about as much influence on my fate as an overhead cloud, and certainly less than an overhead bird in the final stages of digestion. Yet now I am beginning to weaken. Doubtless, many other Americans are too. Until recently the pundits were attributing Ronald Reagan's successful presidency to "magic." No less a political sage than Dr. Garry Wills, toiling in the pages of *Time* magazine, attributed the President's success to "magic." So now we know the source of the magic. Why all the surprise?

In the end, when the last gasp over Mr. Regan's revelations of White House stargazing sounds, my guess is that Mr. Regan's only effect will be a mild boom in the occult, and I take it he had higher ambitions than that. His problem in attempting to denigrate the President is that the President is a success. In fact, Ronald Reagan has presided over the first successful presidency since the 1950s. Now as he teeters through his eighth and final summer in the White House and the sniping begins, it is instructive to recall that he is the first President since Eisenhower to reach such a point and the only one in history to achieve it at the age of 77.

Some of his early accomplishments are now beginning to tarnish. His policy in Central America is in a dismal condition. He had rehabilitated the prestige of the presidency, but that prestige is now somewhat reduced. Yet in both cases the responsibility for these problems has to be borne at least in part by others: in Central America by the congressional Democrats who thwart his policy with no better policy to offer; in his entourage by those who have no honor. When the historians contemplate the prosperity and peace of the Reagan years, they are going to have to confront one fact: Ronald Reagan was President during that peace and prosperity.

Donald Regan, of course, is an ingrate. If he felt frustrated by Nancy Reagan he had the honorable alternative of quitting. He could have written his book for the historic record but he should have had the decency of earlier disgruntled appointees such as James A. Farley under FDR and Sherman Adams under Eisenhower. He should have waited until his benefactor was in retirement: and then he might have practiced the restraint that others in his position have shown in the past. But he could not. As the poet wrote, Don Regan has demonstrated all the attributes of a dog save loyalty. □

CAPITOL IDEAS



BECKMANN VS. EINSTEIN

by Tom Bethell

After Howard Higman's conference at the University of Colorado ("Boulder's World," *TAS*, June 1988) I went up into the Rocky Mountain foothills to see my old friend Petr Beckmann, who lives in a mountain eyrie with his wife Irene, two black Labradors, an A.B. Dick 360 printing press, science books and journals, and a mass of publishing paraphernalia. John McCarthy, a computer-science professor at Stanford, calls Beckmann "the I.F. Stone of the right," but that is not quite on target. Beckmann is part libertarian (but he considers most libertarians too left-wing), part Randian (too much of a cult there), and wholly anti-Communist. Since 1973 he has published *Access to Energy*, a "Pro-Science, Pro-Technology, Pro-Free Enterprise Monthly Newsletter," for about 3500 subscribers. Every day he bicycles down into Boulder to pick up his mail—sixteen miles round trip, vertical climb of 1100 feet on the way back—which is sufficient exercise for a 63-year-old man with sixteen screws in his shin bone (bicycling accident in September 1986).

Apart from putting out his newsletter (a marvelous read every month), Beckmann writes books and publishes them himself under the imprint of Golem Press. *The Health Hazards of Not Going Nuclear* has sold 50,000 copies since he published it in 1976, and *The History of Pi* has sold well, too. But the book that interested me and that I wanted to discuss with him was published only recently—*Einstein Plus Two*, a critique (perhaps a demolition) of Einstein's special theory of relativity. He spent four years writing it, but he had worked on it sporadically for decades, conducting some experiments relevant to the theory while teaching at the University of Colorado.

Beckmann told me that he is confident there is a fundamental error in Einstein's theory. His book presents a different theory, giving results consistent with all known experiments, including those most recently conducted with lasers. Beckmann's theory also explains two further phenomena which Einstein's theory cannot derive—the quantization of electron orbits, and the Titius-Bode Law, describing the orbits of all four known planetary systems (the Solar System and the moons of Jupiter, Saturn, and Uranus).

We went out for a walk and Beckmann told me a bit about himself, occasionally giving orders in Czech to one or another of his dogs. He was born in Prague in 1924, and, because his father was categorized as politically endangered (both his parents were Communists, as well as Jewish), he and his mother were transported as refugees to England in 1939. He spent World War Two in England, enlisted in a Czech squadron of the Royal Air Force, and serviced the then secret radar project. He so treasures his wartime memories of England that he doesn't want to go back and discover that victory was won only that Punk Rock might triumph.

In 1945 Beckmann returned to Czechoslovakia, received a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Prague Technical University, and then a Doctor of Science degree from the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences. In 1963 he was invited by the University of Colorado to be a visiting professor; he defected to the U.S. the following year, and thereafter he taught electrical engineering at Boulder until his retirement in 1981. He has published more than 60 scientific papers, mostly devoted to electromagnetics and probability theory.

During his eighteen years at the university Beckmann saw a tremendous decline in higher education, beginning with the Vietnam war, the slide continuing to this day. "England in 1939 was nowhere near as far gone as the U.S. is today," he said with characteristic pessimism. Moreover, "Hitler had very few sympathizers," unlike the Soviet leadership today. He believes the general deterioration of morale in the U.S. will continue "until we are hit over the head with a stick." What that stick will be he does not know, but one possibility is "the Soviet Union being taken over by the military."

Beckmann told me that he had doubted Einstein's theory ever since he was first taught it. It was true, he conceded, that many "nuts" attack Einstein, but a fair number of respectable scientists have long questioned the theory as well, among them Albert A. Michelson of Michelson-Morley fame. Beckmann said Einstein's special theory should not be called a theory "of relativity," for that is not what characterizes the theory. The postulate of relativity was stated by Isaac Newton in the *Principia* and Beckmann considers it uncontroversial. According to it, if one object is moving in relation to another, there is no "privileged position" in the universe permitting us to decide which is moving and which is at rest. The laws of physics apply impartially, whether you decide one is moving and the other at rest, or vice versa.

It is Einstein's famous second postulate that Beckmann challenges: the claim that the speed of light is a constant, whether or not the observer is moving in relation to the light source. As Einstein famously claimed, two observers, one moving toward and another away from a light source, will

Tom Bethell is The American Spectator*'s Washington correspondent and a media fellow at the Hoover Institution. A collection of his essays,* The Electric Windmill, *was published by Regnery Gateway this spring.*

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both measure the light as moving toward them at identical speeds. Beckmann dissents. His rival claim is that the velocity of light is constant with respect to the gravitational field through which it passes. Light from a distant star, for example, will travel at one speed in its local gravitational field, increase as it moves out into space, then slow down again as it approaches the sun, and then travel at a slightly different speed as it moves into the gravitational field of the Earth. Light, in fact, should be thought of as a disturbance of the gravitational field, just as sound is a disturbance of the air. "Like waves on the water of a stream flowing into a river and into the sea," Beckmann writes, "light travels with different relative velocities through a vacuum in the terrestrial field, through that in the solar field, and through that of the fields that lie beyond."

As can be shown by simple geometry, Einstein's claim of a constant speed of light, whatever the motion of the observer, leads directly to bizarre results, which in turn are resolved when space and time are distorted accordingly by what is known as the Lorentz Transformation. These distortions are themselves dependent on the velocity of the observer. To a fast-moving body, other bodies shrink, put on weight, and age more slowly! The calculations used to alter space and time along these lines precisely offset the geometrical discrepancies that arise when you assume an invariant velocity of light.

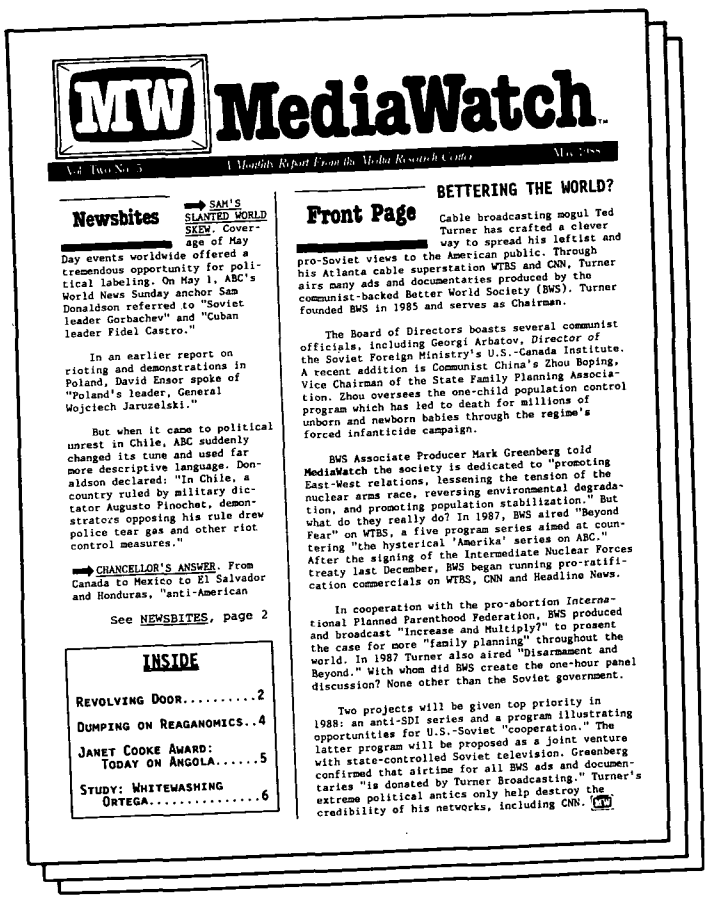
"When I run, I feel a wind; but not one that will make a windmill turn," is the dramatic opening sentence of *Einstein Plus Two.* "A physicist who *falsely* assumes that the effect-producing velocity (that makes the windmill turn) is that with respect to the observer, but *correctly* applies the relativity principle, will expect the windmill to turn when he is running. The experimental evidence will contradict his expectation, and he can then either abandon his false premise, or he can so distort space and time that the observer's motion produces two exactly equal and opposite forces on the windmill, keeping the mill motionless as observed. The Einstein theory, in effect, takes the latter road; but I believe the laws of physics . . . must hold regardless of any observer, who should do nothing but observe."

Space and time are our most fundamental "givens," and velocity (space divided by time) is derived from them. Beckmann likens the assumption that the derivative (velocity) is more basic than the fundamentals (space and time) to the contortions of a man who attempts to reconstruct the ground floor of his house, dwelling undisturbed on the second floor as he does so.

I asked about Einstein's famous formula equating mass and energy ($E=mc^2$). Had this not been demonstrated by the atom bomb? The formula is "perfectly correct," Beckmann replied, "but you can derive it from universally accepted principles of electromagnetism without distorting space and time." In effect, it has nothing to do with Einstein's theory. Physicists before Einstein came very close to deriving the formula—some say Henri Poincaré did.

What about the oft-repeated story of the advance of Mercury's perihelion (the orbital point closest to the sun)? A 43-seconds-of-arc-per-century discrepancy (from the result predicted by Newton) had been discovered in 1880. Supposedly Einstein's theory "predicted" this. "Einstein's theory accounted exactly for this [43-second] residue," Bertrand Russell wrote in *The ABC of Relativity.*

Beckmann said he could hardly believe the way history had been distorted in the semi-official version of Mercury's perihelion. What was later to be known as Einstein's formula (explaining Mercury's orbit) was discovered and published in 1898, seventeen years before Einstein, by a man named Paul


MW MediaWatch™

Vol. Two No. 5 A Monthly Report From the Media Research Center May 1988

Newsbites

➡ SAM'S SLANTED WORLD SKEW. Coverage of May Day events worldwide offered a tremendous opportunity for political labeling. On May 1, ABC's World News Sunday anchor Sam Donaldson referred to "Soviet leader Gorbachev" and "Cuban leader Fidel Castro."

In an earlier report on rioting and demonstrations in Poland, David Ensor spoke of "Poland's leader, General Wojciech Jaruzelski."

But when it came to political unrest in Chile, ABC suddenly changed its tune and used far more descriptive language. Donaldson declared: "In Chile, a country ruled by military dictator Augusto Pinochet, demonstrators opposing his rule drew police tear gas and other riot control measures."

➡ CHANCELLOR'S ANSWER. From Canada to Mexico to El Salvador and Honduras, "anti-American

See NEWSBITES, page 2

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Front Page

BETTERING THE WORLD?

Cable broadcasting mogul Ted Turner has crafted a clever way to spread his leftist and pro-Soviet views to the American public. Through his Atlanta cable superstation WTBS and CNN, Turner airs many ads and documentaries produced by the communist-backed Better World Society (BWS). Turner founded BWS in 1985 and serves as Chairman.

The Board of Directors boasts several communist officials, including Georgi Arbatov, Director of the Soviet Foreign Ministry's U.S.-Canada Institute. A recent addition is Communist China's Zhou Boping, Vice Chairman of the State Family Planning Association. Zhou oversees the one-child population control program which has led to death for millions of unborn and newborn babies through the regime's forced infanticide campaign.

BWS Associate Producer Mark Greenberg told MediaWatch the society is dedicated to "promoting East-West relations, lessening the tension of the nuclear arms race, reversing environmental degradation, and promoting population stabilization." But what do they really do? In 1987, BWS aired "Beyond Fear" on WTBS, a five program series aimed at countering "the hysterical 'Amerika' series on ABC." After the signing of the Intermediate Nuclear Forces treaty last December, BWS began running pro-ratification commercials on WTBS, CNN and Headline News.

In cooperation with the pro-abortion International Planned Parenthood Federation, BWS produced and broadcast "Increase and Multiply?" to present the case for more "family planning" throughout the world. In 1987 Turner also aired "Disarmament and Beyond." With whom did BWS create the one-hour panel discussion? None other than the Soviet government.

Two projects will be given top priority in 1988: an anti-SDI series and a program illustrating opportunities for U.S.-Soviet "cooperation." The latter program will be proposed as a joint venture with state-controlled Soviet television. Greenberg confirmed that airtime for all BWS ads and documentaries "is donated by Turner Broadcasting." Turner's extreme political antics only help destroy the credibility of his networks, including CNN.

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Publisher, *National Review*

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Gerber, who was probably a high-school teacher in Stargard, Germany. Using classical, not Einsteinian physics, and the assumption that gravity is not instantaneous (as Newton thought) but propagates with the velocity of light, Gerber derived Einstein's equation exactly. By contrast Einstein used a complex trick bag of gravitational tensors and Riemannian geometry. Yet Gerber is forgotten.

Is there not something wrong with a theory that gets you to the right place (the explanation of Mercury's orbit) by a complex route, distorting space and time *en passant*, when you can arrive at the same destination by simple methods?

Likewise the Michelson-Gale experiment of 1925 (not to be confused with Michelson-Morley) demonstrated an optical effect that is immediately explained as illustrating the different velocities of light along different latitudes of the rotating Earth (the Earth's gravitational field does not rotate *with* the Earth). Michelson used three lines of high-school algebra and classical physics. Einstein bent space and time with tensor calculus to get the same result.

Another famous experiment that supposedly confirmed Einstein was the demonstration (at the time of a solar eclipse in 1919) that light rays from stars are bent when they pass through the gravitational field of the sun. But such refraction is exactly what would be predicted if the velocity of light varies as the gravitational field changes. In order to explain the light path observed in 1919, said Beckmann, you do not need Einstein's complications—only the principle that light travels along the path that gets it from A to B in the shortest time (Fermat's Principle).

The great problem in testing the relative merits of Einstein's theory and his own, Beckmann said, is that all or nearly all the evidence confirming Einstein is generated by experiments in which "the observer is nailed to the gravitational field of the Earth." And in all such experiments, Beckmann and Einstein would expect to get the same results. In principle, Beckmann says, there are experiments that can decide between the two, but at present it is not possible to measure this difference, because measuring instruments can still only be moved at an insignificant fraction of the speed of light.

"I am not so naive as to think that the first attempt to move the entire Einstein theory *en bloc* onto classical ground will turn out to be perfectly correct," Beckmann writes in his preface. But he told me that he was nonetheless confident that Einstein's theory is wrong. Meanwhile, he said, he was beginning to worry that "they'll fail to crucify me." He would rather have his errors exposed, if such exist, than be ignored. A handful of physicists have taken note of Beckmann's effort, however, among them Howard C. Hayden, an associate professor of physics at the University of Connecticut.

"Frankly, I think he's on to something," Hayden told me over the telephone. He said he would recommend Beckmann's book to anyone interested in the logical structure of physics. Hayden also said he was submitting an article "about one aspect of the book" to the journal *Foundations of Physics*. "Beckmann asserts that the speed of light has never been shown to be a constant," he said. "At first I thought this must be wrong, but I have since reviewed the literature and I have not found one paper that would show him to be incorrect. The constancy of the speed of light has not been demonstrated experimentally. The simplest explanation for all the speed of light experiments is not Einstein's, it's Beckmann's, and he gets the results normally attributed to relativity effects without the use of distorted space and time." □

*(*Einstein Plus Two *may be ordered from The Golem Press, Box 1342, Boulder, Colorado, 80306, $36 pp.)*

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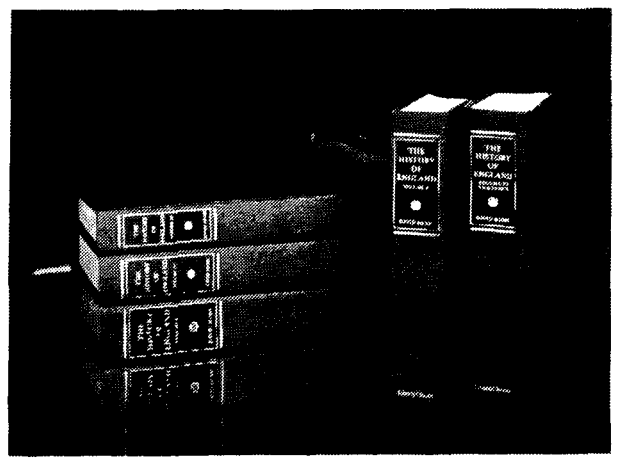

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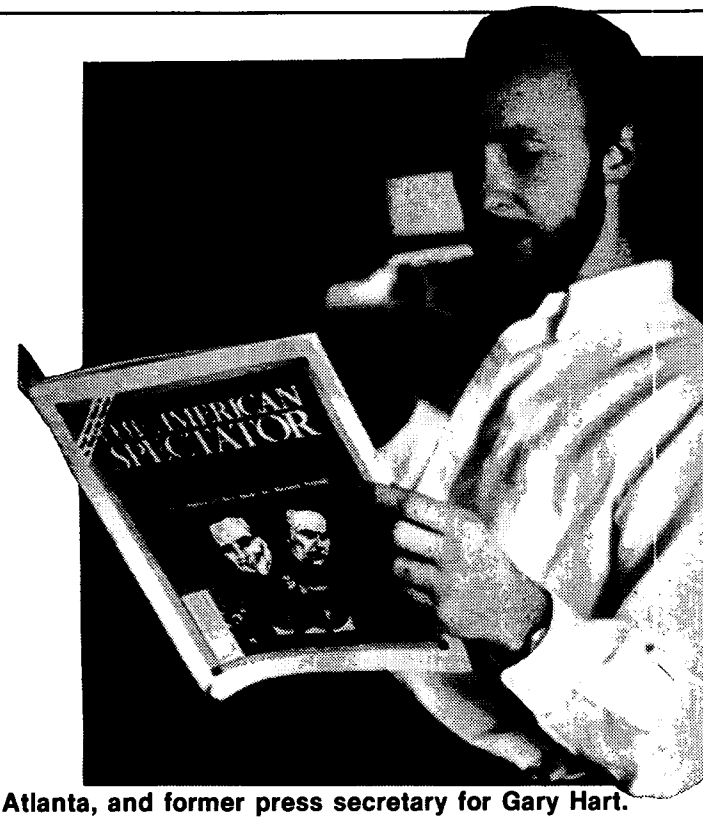

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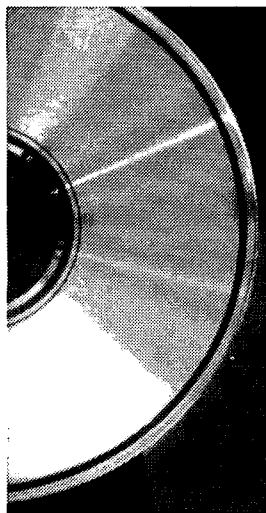

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Micah Morrison

GEORGE BUSH, STATESMAN

In an exclusive interview, the Vice President submits a foreign policy for conservatives to reflect on.

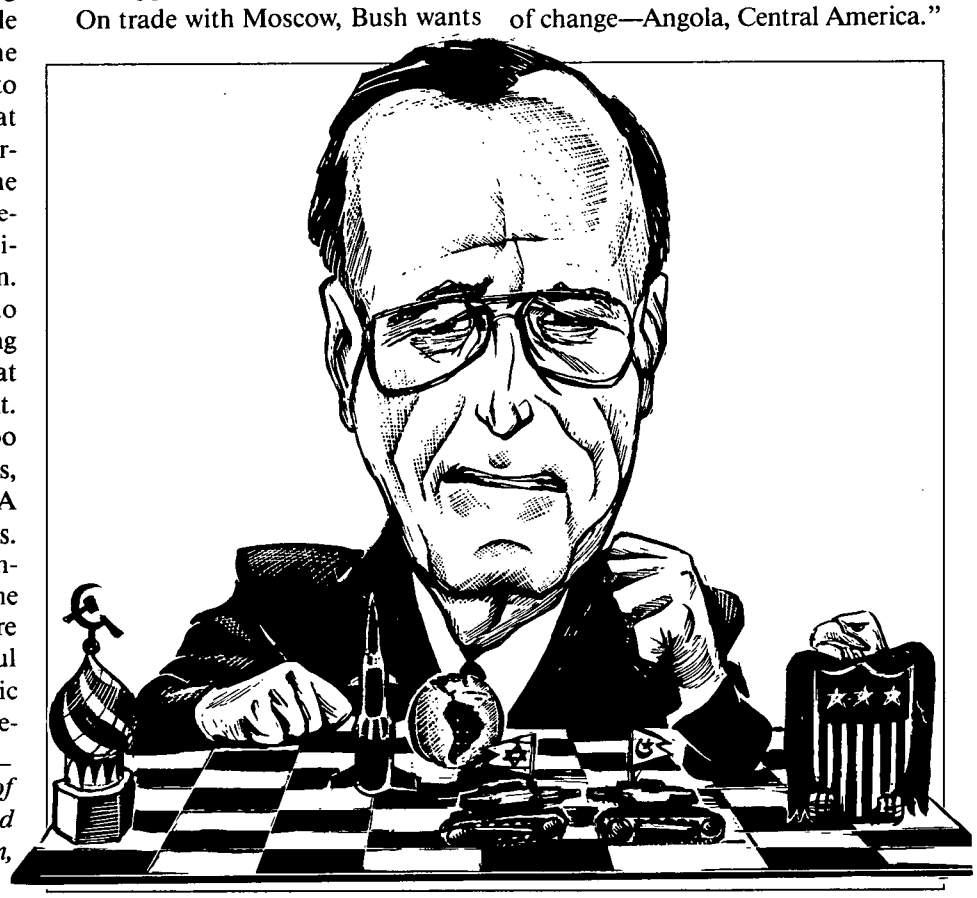
Conservatives have not let George Herbert Walker Bush forget his cantankerous right flank. George Will called him a "lapdog" in 1986 and has been peeved at the Veeper ever since. Around the same time, Richard Viguerie told the *Wall Street Journal* that a Bush candidacy in 1988 would restore to the GOP "the image of the little man in the top hat in the Monopoly game . . . destroying hopes for a Republican majority." Then there was the widespread and—has anyone noticed?—now faded wimp business. Evans and Novak recently wrote that Bush's remarks "on defense spending and arms control could, with slight editing, be uttered by any Democratic candidate." Hawks of various persuasions suspect that he will allow SDI to be strangled in its research-and-testing crib and START us down the slippery slope of unverifiable and destabilizing long-range nuclear-arms cuts. As trade with Moscow picks up speed in the Reagan twilight—"Abel again rushes to pull Cain out of the ditch," Pat Buchanan tartly observed—dark murmurings of "detente" issue from the wings. George Bush: the Corporate Republican; the Establishment Republican; the not-tough-enough Republican. Too willing to cut deals, say those who support the Reagan Doctrine of rolling back Communism and dread a retreat into a lackluster policy of containment. The pro-Israel camp worries: Is he too pro-Arab? Uninspiring on the contras, Central American activists protest. A lack of vision, cry the vision-seekers.

What gives? Are the complaints simply the sort of pessimistic kvetching the right loves to engage in even after more than seven not altogether unsuccessful years of the unflappably optimistic Ronald Reagan, or does Bush pose serious problems for the way conservatives wish to see the foreign policy of the United States conducted? I caught up with the candidate aboard Air Force Two on a recent flight down to West Virginia and discussed some of the foreign policy issues of concern to conservatives.

After months on the campaign trail, Bush appeared relaxed, almost serene. Contrary to the Democratic candidates, he is fully in command of the details of complex strategic and international questions and seems to enjoy talking about them. He made a point of repeatedly stressing his belief that there have been no "fundamental changes" in the Soviet Union, no basic "changes in direction. We should look at what's happening in the Soviet Union," he added, "as a challenge—meaning, be careful, be cautious—but as an opportunity" too.

On trade with Moscow, Bush wants to tighten up the export control system on high-technology, strategically important items. "One area we can do more with them is in agricultural exports," he said. "I strongly favor agricultural exports to the Soviet Union. I would not impose a grain embargo for political purposes—that proved to be counterproductive, and it made us lose market share. But in terms of a *naive* view that all is well now and we're on some kind of new plane of 'detente,' I don't believe that."

Bush said that the U.S. must continue to look for signs of fundamental shifts in the Soviet Union's domestic and foreign policies. "How do you find those shifts? Some of them are through regional change. I'm delighted that the Soviets have agreed to *begin* taking their forces out of Afghanistan. But there are other areas where we ought to look for some kind of manifestation of change—Angola, Central America."



Regarding meeting regional challenges from the Soviets, the Vice President remarked that "if you see something worth doing, don't be *afraid* to do it, but don't suggest that that means there is a fundamental change in the system—I think the jury is still out" on the question of fundamental change.

There is a restrained cast to Bush's statements; he does not engage in broad intellectual or rhetorical sweeps. He's familiar with and bows briefly in the direction of the Big Ideas—Marxism-Leninism, Democracy, Rollback, Containment, Mutual Assured Destruction—but then steers the conversation back to details, to specific regions, issues, negotiating stances, historical lessons. The word "realistic" and warnings about naivete frequently surface. "I believe that our system—capitalism, freedom, and democracy—is so superior to Marxism" that it is simply no contest. "The role of the United States is to be strong advocates for freedom and democracy—hold that banner high—and wherever possible offer hope and support for those that are struggling."

He said he favors continued support for a policy of rollback. "I don't know whether we've rolled back Communism in Afghanistan, but it looks like we've rolled back Soviet occupation—and that's a very worthy thing. And similarly we should work to see that the Cubans get out of Angola, that Angola has a right to be associated with the West and not be dominated by a Marxist master."

Of dictatorships in Latin America, Bush said he was "optimistic about the hemisphere. We hear all the criticisms from the liberals and the Democrats, but great progress has been made and I really believe we're on the threshold of a much more democratic hemisphere. I think we'll see some of the dictatorships of the right give way to more

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democracy." But, he noted, "I don't see much hope at this juncture for Castro." Bush would not expand relations with the Cuban strongman unless Castro "makes clear that he wants to forego his revolutionary zeal." I asked him if he would re-arm the contras if the Arias Plan failed. "Absolutely," he said. "I would strive to keep the contras in business. Absolutely."

A Bush Administration's nuclear and NATO strategy, says the Vice President, would put a strong emphasis on getting the Soviet Union to reduce its conventional forces. He is cautiously supportive of the START talks, which aim for a fifty-percent reduction in strategic nuclear forces. "The problem is more verification than the question of whether it's good to have a fifty-percent reduction in nuclear arms." Bush indicated that he would link the START talks to the long-running conventional-force reduction negotiations. "It's very difficult for me to separate the START talks from the conventional force," he said. "In the first place, the conventional imbalance is so clear that it has to be rectified if we're going to deter aggression. Secondly, it's the costly side of the defense equation and I'm still very worried about our budget deficit."

In the Vice President's view, the INF treaty established two important principles for future negotiations: "the principle of asymmetrical reduction" of forces (they take out more than we do) and the principle of "intrusive verification." We should "push forward" based on "those two principles," he said. Bush also mentioned that he was "emotionally attached" to reducing chemical and biological weapons, but warned of extreme verification problems in these areas as well.

President Bush would not push for early deployment of the Strategic Defense Initiative. He supports "thorough" research and testing. "In a theoretical world," he said, SDI "clearly" could move the U.S. away from the doctrine of Mutual Assured Destruction. His view is that SDI is nowhere near that point. "We ought to rethink, as we move into a high technology age, our whole doctrinal approach to keeping the peace. SDI offers that real potential, even though a lot of people are saying it won't work. And you always have to contend with the expense of it, too. It won't be cheap."

Bush's stance on Israel and related Mideast questions has been the subject of much worried speculation in pro-Israel circles. His 1986 trip to Saudi Arabia, where he spoke of "stabilizing" falling oil prices, is often cited by his critics, as is the remark by his chief national security adviser, Donald Gregg, that Bush does not share the same "gut feeling" for Israel as President Reagan. Morton Kondracke reported that "pro-Israel lobbyists fear that Bush would defer on Mideast policy to 'the permanent government'—the Near East bureau of the State Department and professionals in the CIA and Pentagon—which tends to be pro-Arab."

Bush stressed that the U.S. was "an ally and strong supporter of Israel," as well as "a catalytic friend." He said the "elections in Israel [currently scheduled for November of 1988] will make clear the direction" in which Jerusalem will travel. "We have to find a solution to the Palestinian question. Dukakis is wrong," said the Vice President, growing animated and leaning forward to drive home the point, "to even toy with the idea of a Palestinian state. That's a non-starter—so there's no point in wasting one's time talking about that. I still feel that the suggestion in the Reagan Plan of the early eighties—the confederation with Jordan—some solution to the Palestinian question based on a broad formula of that nature—is important." Bush would "take a good look at what's happening internally in Israel, get a good feel of what's happening on the ground in Jordan and to some degree in Syria, and then *restart* the effort to try to bring direct negotiations—no pre-set agenda—between Hussein" and whoever is running the Israeli government.

"That's the answer," Bush emphasized. "There isn't any *secret* new peace plan for the Middle East." The Vice President would not object to a U.N. "umbrella" to lead the way into direct negotiations, "but what I don't want is an ongoing participatory role for the Soviet Union that enhances their power in the Middle East." The 1989-1990 period, with recently elected governments in Washington and Jerusalem, "offers new promise." The trick is to get Jordan's King Hussein to the table, "get good people involved, and see where we go. But there isn't any simple formula to it."

The plane began to head down over the green hummocks and slate rivers of West Virginia. I had been getting signals from the press aide to wrap it up for quite some time. I asked the Vice President what he would do to avoid some of the problems that have made for an inconsistent or incoherent Reagan Administration foreign policy. Bush referred to the "erosion of presidential power" at the hands of Congress and took a gentle swipe at the warring bureaucratic interests that have dogged Reagan policy. "I would like to have policymakers at State and supportive people at NSC in terms of *policy*—if I campaign on freedom and democracy in the hemisphere . . . I'd like to have the top people be people who are *supportive* of that concept—of how do we then implement policy based on the premise that we are committed to the expansion of democracy in the hemisphere."

The interview was over. A stewardess buzzed forward with the candidate's lunch: a grilled cheese sandwich.

After months on the campaign trail, Bush appeared relaxed, almost serene.

It seems that George Bush's problems with the conservatives have a lot to do with style and a little to do with substance. Obviously, the man is not a lapdog or a wimp: wimps don't join the Navy at age eighteen and fly combat operations off an aircraft carrier, nor do they fly down to El Salvador forty years later and successfully press rightist extremists to curtail death-squad activities. George Bush did both—at some risk to life and limb. "It was eerie," said an aide who was with Bush in El Salvador. "You could hear artillery fire in the hills, and the Vice President just weighed right into those guys." He's tough enough to deal with Gorbachev and any other heavily armed thug to come down the pike.

But Bush is not a great communicator, and for eight years he has been working in the shadow of one. Conservatives have been spoiled by the Theater of Reagan: the President's rhetorical flights soar above the political realities of Washington, realities that have done much to humble conservative expectations. With Bush, one gets reality without the smooth rhetoric.

The candidate's view of the Soviet Union is well informed and solidly conservative. My guess is that, if elected, he'll continue to fund ongoing attempts to roll back Communism but will move very slowly into new areas. Watch Mozambique for an indication of the future of rollback.

A major question is how far President Bush would go in handling uprisings in the heart of the Soviet empire. Big Mike Gorbachev clearly is going to have major trouble keeping the comrades off the freedom train now that they've been offered a glimpse of *perestroika*. In an aside to a question on rollback versus containment, the Vice President recalled the Hungarian revolt of 1956. "You're dealing with realities," he said, "and you've got to be careful. When you see an uprising in Hungary—some were urging those people to the barricades and then they were left out there, their lives lost and no monuments. . . . I don't think it's just a benign situation of leave everything the way it is. The world's *in a state of change*. You're seeing it in China—it hasn't moved to democracy as you and I know it, but it has moved to a lot more freedom for the people of China. . . . And so, you take a realistic look at the world, you keep your philosophical commitment to freedom and democracy, and you strive, where possible, to help others achieve freedom and democracy."

On SDI, Bush will not make hawks happy: no early deployment, which means that congressional battles over funding could kill the program. Prepare for the Long March on SDI. The candidate gives the impression he will move very cautiously on START and other matters relating to Western security: conservatives (including some Democrats) can expect Bush to be receptive to their grave reservations about rushing into START without a strategic vision for the post-START future; about verification problems; conventional force reductions; and the need to clarify the role of SDI *before* the START agreement is inked. The next administration, Democratic or Republican, will seek to expand trade with the Soviet Union; Bush says he will exact a good price for trade expansion. This is definitely a man with his eye on the bottom line and the deficits; budget quandaries frequently came up in our talk. He'll wade into problems in Latin America and the Mideast, but it will likely be a blend of old methods and plans—don't expect aggressive new initiatives.

It is, more or less, the policy of the late Reagan years. Bush is no fool and can be expected to redress some of the more colossal Reagan blunders. For conservatives who see the general thrust of Reagan policy as a problem, George Bush will be more of the same. But Reagan is still a man you can depend on to do the right thing in certain clutch situations—walking out of Reykjavik, upgrading the naval deployment in the Persian Gulf—and I think the same can be said of Bush. Conservatives still will have plenty to complain about, but Bush is a member of the family: he'll pay attention if hammered at hard enough, and if convinced, he'll act. The glitz and gloss of the Reagan era is passing: here's a quiet conservative, with a flinty New England reticence and a dash of Texas courtliness.

Let's face it: the reason conservatives are not completely happy with George Bush is that we are not completely happy with Ronald Reagan. Some right-flyers apparently have forgotten what it was like before these two gentlemen arrived in Washington. □

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Gregory A. Fossedal

GEORGE BUSH, POLITICIAN

An issue nerd argues why the Veeper cannot wait until Labor Day to make his move.

George Bush was giving a speech at Lander's Restaurant in Lebanon, New Hampshire: a humid summer day, mid-July, 1979. About 150 people, Rotary Club types, were on hand to listen. To my knowledge, a total of two reporters were there: me and someone from the *Valley News*. My job was to record any newsworthy remarks he might make for a local campus newspaper, and also, in the event of any major gaffes, charges, or tidbits, as a stringer for the *New York Times*. A friend of mine with a camera also came along.

The speech wasn't much, but it was energetically delivered. Bush seemed to move the same crowd a lot more than Howard Baker had before, or Robert Dole would later that fall. The impression that sticks even today was one of self-conscious balance on Bush's part—balance almost to a degree of imbalance. Few clauses went by without a qualifier, a contrast, or an "on the other hand, yes, you've gotta . . . " Sometimes the balancers piled precariously and piled more, high and higher. Upandupandup, like stacked dishes.

Bush said he supported a "free market" for energy. (Mmmm, sounds like Reagan: Good.) But: He recognized the need for a windfall profits tax. (A Carter theme there.) But: He wanted a "plowback provision" for the producers of energy. (Ouch: John Connally.) But: Money should also be focused on developing alternative sources. (Howard Baker.) But: Some alternatives, such as nuclear power, are dangerous. "So I want to support nuclear power, keep building the plants, but first, implement the recommendations of the Kemeny commission." (The then-forthcoming report was the work of a Carter-appointed team to examine the causes and lessons of the Three Mile Island accident.)

As delivered, these zigs and zags weren't packed quite so tightly. There were a lot of lines that a young Milton Friedman–type Republican (me at the time) found appealing. "We need to rebuild the CIA, improve our intelligence capabilities." Applause. "Respect for the United States has to be a pri-ority." Yea. When Bush wants to stress something, he often gives a particular word or phrase a kind of herky-jerky, slow-motion em-pha-sis. His means of communicating, though, seemed based not on telling you what he thinks is fundamental, but on saying "ab-solutely fundamental" a lot.

After the speech my hand went up. "Mr. Ambassador, Governor Reagan has been very specific about some of the things he'd like to do to reduce the burden of government. Could you tell us just one program or agency in the government you think should be eliminated?" Bush didn't give a very newsworthy answer; in fact, his reply didn't make any of my stories about the speech or his campaign generally.

The memorable part of the day came after the talk. My friend with the camera was standing around with me, waiting to eat some of the free food left lying around and snarf a lukewarm bottle of Michelob, or whatever they were serving. All of a sudden, in the manner of William F. Buckley spying an old Yale chum at a cocktail party—"Keeney, my good friend!"—Bush came swooping down. "Hey, young man, that was a good question you asked. How can we snag you to help us out up here in this state?" We explained, a tad haughtily, that we were not representatives of the local College Republicans club, but were covering his remarks for several News Outlets. "Ah, media . . . great, that's great. We need it, we need it." Neato, we thought. "It's the press," Bush called to some aide, pointing at us, and making us feel as if we were in the middle of a Doonesbury cartoon.

As he said this, Bush started to wedge himself over toward my friend, the cameraman, gently pressing him back a little bit against a long table with empty beer cans. Then he turned to me and said, "We can set up a picture here if you like." The ambassador struck me as a bit forward: "Well, we should probably get moving," I said. Bush kept on, undeterred. "Okay, snap away!" he shouted at the camera.

Both of us felt more than a little uncom-for-table. "What a patronizing creep," my friend opined. "Reminds me of Peter Lorre in *Casablanca*." To my relief, he didn't snap a shot of these happenings, and the impromptu photo opportunity was broken up by some aide just as we began to press for a little more specific answer about slashing the federal leviathan. "Gotta run!" Bush said, seemingly oblivious to our own (somewhat rudely manifested) lack of enthusiasm. "We'll send you some of our position papers on that. Gotta run!"

The Bush campaign never did send the papers. But Bush did pepper me with several unusually personal notes afterwards, hand-written Bush-o-grams on postcard style stationery with a dark blue, Yalish border around it. "Dear Greg—Am at 38,000 feet without typewriter . . . " one began, and that more or less set the tone for several missives on the excitement of running for President; how much Bush was learning from talking to people; what a wonderful country it was where he could keep in touch with a college journalist. One of my responses asked Bush if he was going to release more details about cutting the budget (readers who are beginning to think this was an obsession with me at that time are right). "I have your letter," Bush scrawled back. "I will get you a responsive reply pre-Nov." (Note the tacit and confident prediction that his campaign would still

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be rambling along then.) Another excerpt: "Loved that poll!" referring to a survey by my newspaper that showed Bush the favorite candidate among Dartmouth students.

Amidst the pen-palisms—"Greg, what a boost we got out here in Iowa"—my watchful eye never found the plan to cut federal spending by $90 billion (Reagan's 1976 gambit) that my heart desired. Somehow, though, Bush was worming his way into my affections. Part of it: The man clearly wanted to be President, yet not in the manner of a Connally or Dole, thinking himself some sort of *Ubermensch*. He had the will to power, but even if it led to an occasionally odd display, this pointed to Bush's own humility, and tempered the driving ambition.

The key to my grudging but emerging respect for Bush, though, was a lot simpler. You just couldn't help liking a fellow who would put up with such crap from a 20-year-old smart aleck and still be so nice about it.

Today, my guess is that's where a lot of Reaganites stand. They like Bush. They respect his abilities, grudgingly. But they aren't quite comfortable with Bush personally or, more important, with the content and tone of what they fear will be the Bush campaign: the words "education" and "arms control," spliced with a few unimaginative assaults on "Congress," "Manuel Noriega," and the "Carter years."

This wouldn't matter if all Bush needed was their vote. But the fact is, as former Reagan adviser Martin Anderson has observed, Bush is "missing a great opportunity" if he fails to tap into the vast reservoir of scholars, activists, and writers brought into politics by the Reagan Revolution—people that John Buckley, an ex-aide to ex-candidate Jack Kemp, has aptly called "the issue nerds." And the issue nerds are missing an opportunity to sway his campaign and create something they can get excited about if they don't reach out toward Bush. "It's a kind of situation," as Anderson says, "where the two kids are at the dance, and they want to meet each other, but they're not quite sure what to do."

Snapshot . . . "The Soviet Union is not seeking parity—it is seeking superiority." The speaker is George Bush, at a 1980 campaign stop in New Hampshire. "I want to keep countries around the world that want to be free—are free and want to be—to stay free. And this is why I want to be President."

Nearly twenty years into his national political career, George Bush clearly stands for some things; but many of his positions remain unclear. So you have to read between the tea leaves: figure out who's advising him on what, and more than that, which advisers will be listened to on which issues and in what contexts.

Knowing every one of Bush's advisers, moreover, doesn't tell you whether a President Bush would, say, support enterprise zones, or education vouchers, or a day-care proposal that doesn't shaft stay-at-home mothers, or a loose monetary policy, or a gold standard. For one thing, Bush likes to load up his advisory boards with people who may take quite contradictory positions on things: economists Arthur Laffer and Laffer-curve nemesis Martin Feldstein, for example. For another, politics is largely a matter of emphasis and judgment and timing; you'd need the Manhattan phone directory to sort out all the Bush-adviser tea leaves on even a straightforward issue.

"I have your letter," Bush scrawled back. "I will get you a responsive reply pre-Nov."

So it's fine to reply, as Bush aide Jim Pinkerton told me, that "George Bush is running on his public record and his public statements, the 'outside story' as Rick Brookhiser has called it." But it's equally fair for critics to point out that Bush's outside story often seems to have whole pages and chapters omitted.

Take the Strategic Defense Initiative, simply as an example. Here's a proposal many Reaganites feel strongly about, certainly one of three or four key ideas most would say they'd like to see implemented. Yet you can talk to a dozen people close to Bush and get a dozen different answers about what the Vice President would do. When Kemp and Bush met privately a few days after the former's withdrawal from the presidential race, Kemp reportedly asked what Bush plans to say about Star Wars in the fall. "What about it?" Bush said, according to one account. "Well," Kemp asked, "do you favor rapid deployment?" Bush answered: "Oh, I'm against that." Bush made similar remarks in a meeting with Dole a few days later: "I'm against moving too fast." (All three men declined comment on the conversations.)

If all this strikes readers as a bit insiderish, here are on-the-record assessments from two men who know Bush's mind on Star Wars as well as anyone outside of the Vice President's *pia mater*. Robert Dornan, a congressman from Orange County, is a leading Star Warrior and was one of the first members of the House to endorse Bush. "He knows it's going to be his decision," Dornan says. Yet in several years of numerous meetings, Dornan concedes, "He's never said to me flatly what he would do." Former Navy Secretary John Lehman is also a Bush intimate on defense matters. Yet he comments: "I don't know what the Vice President would do in regards to deployment of SDI. I just don't have any basis for comment."

Now, there's a flip side to all this. As one Bush aide, who asked not to be identified, put it: "Look, it's obvious that with Reagan, it's easier for somebody to walk in and pitch an idea to him, and at the end of the meeting, the old man smiles and says, 'Golly, let's do that.' But then the meeting breaks up and somebody says to Reagan, 'Mr. President, we'd better not,' or Reagan just doesn't follow up on it. Now, with Bush, it's a lot harder to get that nod. Sometimes you talk for an hour and at the end you don't know what he thinks. But if Bush agrees with you and he's going to do something, then it's going to happen. That's not an inconsiderable advantage."

Snapshot . . . The Vice President's office, early 1988.

Congressman who supports Bush: "What issues can we look for down the road in the race? What are the themes of the campaign?"

Bush: "Well, arms control and education, like we've been saying. And experience."

Congressman: "But I mean, what things are you going to run on that will excite young people and conservative activists, get their passion aroused?"

Bush: "Hey, I'm passionate about education."

The common gripe against Bush is that the man is a wimp. In any long conversation about Bush, whether with friend or foe of the Vice President, words like "jugular" and "attack" come up. "Bush isn't a gut fighter," Paul Weyrich says. "You need an enemy in politics, and *ideological* friends. He doesn't understand that."

The archetypal candidate on this model would be Jeane Kirkpatrick—more of a "pit bull," as Robert Dornan implausibly refers to Bush, than a "lap dog," as George Will has called him, equally implausibly. You don't have to be a Bush-basher to see this strain, or think you do. *National Review* editor and one-time Bush speechwriter Richard Brookhiser blamed Bush's 1980 loss partly on an inability to hit Reagan "personally . . . or ideologically." Yet the same piece noted several such attacks, and in 1988 Bush lit into fellow Republicans repeatedly and with relish. Even people who have doubts and reservations about Bush, such as Pat Buchanan, agree: Bush has bile. When Reaganites, trying to sway Buchanan into his own run for the White House in a 1987 meeting, turned to an assault on Bush, PJB demurred. "Bush isn't afraid to mix it up," Buchanan told the group. "That's not the problem." Former Kemp campaign chief Charlie Black calls his Bush counterpart, Lee Atwater, "a master of the attack." Which is why a more relevant worry points directly against the standard that Bush has no fangs.

Many politicians, for reasons mystical, mistakenly assume that voters equate negative campaigning with toughness. It's rather remarkable, if you consider that the two candidates who survived the primaries, Dukakis and Bush, were generally viewed as the least harsh and aggressive, the least like what some Reaganites want Bush now to be. The two most notable attackers in campaign '88 were Jack Kemp and Albert Gore. Both spent much of their time, and a large share of their campaign ads, being tough on everyone else. Neither looked particularly formidable doing so. In fact, a common criticism of both was that they seemed young, over-excited, and a bit shrill.

Bush might want to heed the Kemp-Gore tutorial on the backfiring sledgehammer—for several reasons. One is that Dukakis, unlike the opponents Bush is familiar with, is often as hard to pin down as Bush himself. Ronald Reagan, Jack Kemp, Pete du Pont, Pat Robertson—these are not, generally, men who deny or at least fuzz what they're for. Dukakis is. He has been, and not by coincidence, the vaguest Democrat on policy issues since Jimmy Carter in 1976. He was the "least specific," as the *Washington Post* put it, in raising taxes, i.e., he didn't favor the idea. Although Dukakis finally signed on to the protectionist trade bill in Congress, he was the last to do so. His issue paper on the subject is more free trade than Bush's. And he can point out that "even the Reagan Administration" signed on to most of the elements of the trade bill as early as January. What's more, Dukakis has never voted on a single weapons system or foreign-aid bill in his life.

Bush's people will mine furiously for a few telling Dukakis quotations, on both domestic and foreign policy, and there are some embarrassing ones. But voters discount the old-quotes game, as Vice President "Voodoo" will remember from his own recent "kick-a-little-ass" past.

Another reason is that Bush is not exactly V. P. Nimble. Now, though he has often said he wishes he were "more articulate," this is over-grim. He is ac-

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tually more articulate on foot than Ronald Reagan or Ted Kennedy—two heart-throb speakers who do poorly when not reading from index cards or a teleprompter. The trouble is that as Vice President, as the Man of Experience, Bush is opening himself up awfully wide if he tries to make the campaign come down to a contest of repartee. There will be, as in the Nixon-Kennedy election, a double standard, in which gaffes by the inexperienced governor are treated as a ho-hum affair, while mistakes by the Vice President will reveal that he isn't so polished after all. Unfair, maybe, but true, certainly.

In the last election between a Republican of experience and a rube governor—1976—the voice of experience set out to educate the Plains Hillbilly about the facts of Eastern Europe. "Poland," Gerald Ford said, "is not under Communist domination." Ford's running mate also made a famous remark about "Democrat wars." Both attacks were plausible, in a sense. Ford simply meant to say the U.S. doesn't concede the legitimacy of Soviet rule. Dole was responding to a Mondale quip about "Republican recessions." Yet voters, asked to support Ford-Dole on the basis of their sheer professionalism, had nothing to fall back on when it turned out they couldn't toss darts and chew gum at the same time. Why not trust the toothy-grinned governor?

The dangers of running as Competent Man were well illustrated on April 26, when Bush laid out his bash-Dukakis strategy in a speech in Evansville. "Bush Cites 'Inexperience' in Opening a Direct Campaign Against Dukakis," Gerald M. Boyd reported the next day in the *New York Times*. Asked how he would respond if Dukakis says he has enough experience not to sell arms to the Ayatollah Khomeini, Bush replied: "I'm going to say, 'Hey, the federal government has spent about $10 million looking into this matter, we've had special prosecutors and the Scowcroft commission, so what's your question, Mike?' "

The Scowcroft commission? Boyd didn't mention it, but the "Scowcroft commission," in common discourse, is a panel that reported to Ronald Reagan in 1982 about the MX missile and deterrence generally. A later panel—the "Tower commission"—made recommendations to the President on reforming the National Security Council after the Iran-contra scandal broke. A few weeks later, there he went again: Bush telling an embarrassed audience that he and Ronald Reagan have "had sex together."

Bush likes to head up his advisory boards with people who may take quite contradictory positions on things.

Snapshot . . . Barber Conable, chairman of Bush's 1980 presidential campaign steering committee: "George's people have moved into the government in a significant degree. He brought in highly competent managers to the Republican party . . . while Mr. Reagan wants to make it the party of ideas. There's a hell of a difference."—Dun's Business Month, 1984.

A former assistant to Martin Anderson, Jim Pinkerton, the thirty-something-old director of research, ranks below the upper tier of Bush aides on a flow chart. Yet, by virtue of strategic insight, he is, like Roger Ailes and sometime-speechwriter Peggy Noonan, near the top in importance. Asked why George Bush won the New Hampshire primary, Pinkerton said: "For a whole host of reasons, but most decisively, that he managed to create a sharp contrast with Bob Dole on three issues: One, tax increases; two, an oil import fee; and three, the INF treaty."

Some Reaganites heave no love sighs for the INF treaty, of course, but the mere fact that someone at the Bush campaign sees his victory in such terms is important. Pinkerton might have added that Bush not only decided to attack Dole as a tax hiker; he was able to. And to deflect Kemp's charge that Bush is a Dole in veep's clothing.

Why? Because of some positive stands taken much earlier. Bush signed the no-tax pledge in 1987. Dole didn't. Bush campaigned for an actual cut in the capital gains tax, aping Kemp. Dole didn't. Bush responded immediately to January spot ads on Bush-the-tax-hiker with not-me ads of his own. Dole tried to film one, but garbled the line, Freudianly telling a head-scratching GOP audience: "I pledge to veto any bill that . . . cuts taxes."

Not all Bush aides would agree with Pinkerton. An official higher up than Pinkerton, who declined to be identified, said of New Hampshire: "It was, first of all, a matter of organization; and, relatedly but separate, of Judd Gregg [a New Hampshire representative who chaired Bush's congressional steering committee]; and, I think, a superior staff, a really superior group of people on the campaign who didn't panic." It's hard to believe some in the Bush camp think that his sheer bureaucracy outdid equally organized efforts by Robertson and Dole, and at least in New Hampshire, by Kemp as well. Yet there you have it. Indeed, when the *New York Times* asked Atwater his strategy for a victory last year, he pointed to Bush's Air Force II jet and the red-carpet being rolled out at one campaign stop and said, "That's why we're going to win."

Months after his political career came within a few hours of ending—Bush's final days in New Hampshire—the Vice President's campaign manager, and Bush himself, still may not realize that his victory hinged not on a last-minute decision to attack Dole, but on months of positive proposals which rendered Bush credible as a supply-side, tax-cutting Reaganite. Tax accusations stuck to Dole like fly-paper; Bush was Vice President Teflon.

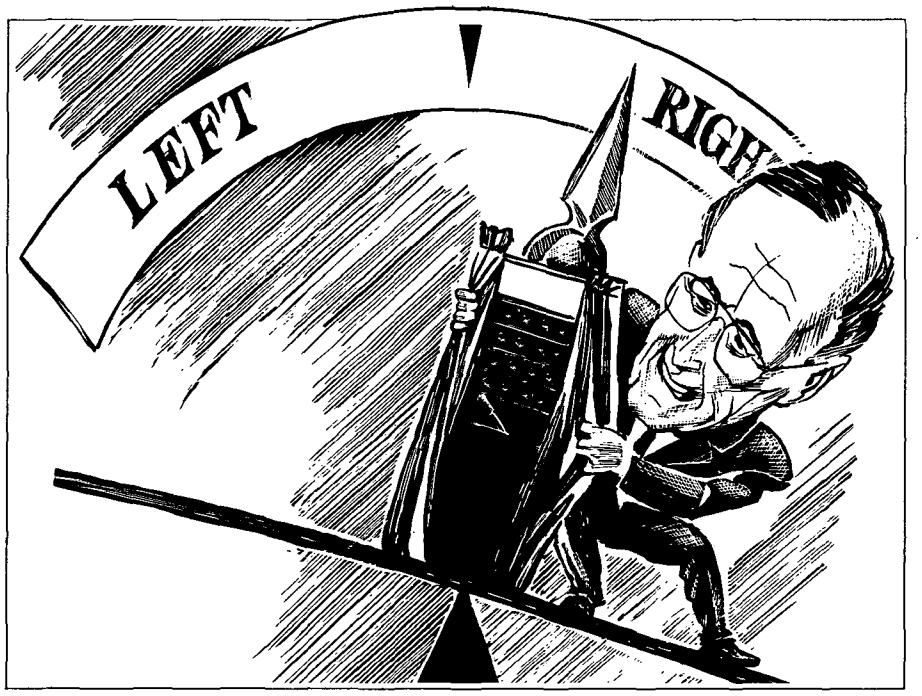
All this is critical to the Bush campaign, because his organization starts out with an approach that tends to eschew issues. The influential James Baker wing of advisers, which includes prospective Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, can best be thought of not so much as moderate, or pragmatic, or non-rightist, but rather as shunning controversy. Baker has been a terrific man in government, working deals and even using the bureaucracy to come up with policy innovations such as the Administration's increasing emphasis on balanced monetary policy. But in every campaign he has managed, including Reagan's 1984 effort, issues were few and far between—and Republicans fared poorly in congressional races as a result. For all the complaints that Bush is a wimp, what Reaganites really fear about the man is that he is simply vague and passive.

And yet, even this does not quite hit the mark. For in fact, on some issues, Bush has been an activist, and not only in the narrow sense of energetically backing a stand already established as safe by Reagan.

Early this April, Bush aides were stunned to be watching Muammar Qaddafi on the "Today" show when suddenly the host asked what the Libyan madman thought about the U.S. presidential race. Qaddafi launched into a 30-second endorsement of Bush, who would be "a better President" than Reagan because he "would not be as crazy." Within a few hours, Bush aide Donald Gregg and the Vice President himself had reworked the text of a speech to be delivered that day at the National Press Club to include this tidbit: Qaddafi, Bush said, had loaned money to help bail out indicted drug-runner and fellow scumbag Manuel Noriega of Panama. Bush had advance approval from the White House to make a splash with the sensitive information.

So to say that Bush's role as veep carries with it an enforced passivity just isn't fair. He-no-wimp profiles of Bush often note his 1970s establishment of Team B at the Central Intelligence Agency, a useful exercise that enabled outside academics like Harvard's Richard Pipes to scrutinize the CIA's too-low estimates of Soviet defense spending and military capabilities. Then again, Bush sided with the agency estimates as valid even after Team B thoroughly exposed serious flaws. Pipes worked for the Dole campaign in 1988.

Similarly, Bush's more recent role as head of task forces on terrorism, deregulation, and reducing the inflow of drugs, are well known, and oft-cited. None involved any policy daring, however. And two of the efforts—drug control and the war on terrorism—haven't been very successful. A military officer who worked on Bush's drug crusade told me: "He did nothing to



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help the effort and in fact hurt." For example, several times from 1982 to 1984, Bush flew into Florida to praise the work of his task force after major seizures of drugs. Yet in some cases, the task force hadn't even been involved. The efforts of Bush, or at least his staffers, appeared to hard-working local cops as a federal credit grab, and left a sour taste. Today, the officer says, "we have a hard time getting them to cooperate. . . . They're afraid of the Bush fly-in."

The really interesting events in Bush's role as Vice President and former superbureaucrat lie elsewhere.

One such episode was a 1983 speech Bush delivered in Austria—where he declared U.S. territorial concessions allegedly made at Yalta and Helsinki, if they ever were made, effectively void. Now, the State Department and National Security Council had already fully agreed to the new policy. There was nothing speculative about it. Still, it was Bush who offered to break the new ground himself—during a sensitive trip meant to rally support for the Euromissile deployments. This was a risk, to say the least. If the speech had ignited European worries about a radical U.S. administration, Bush would have been blamed. The Soviet news agency, TASS, later labeled the comments "libelous." Several Bush advisers suggested canning the speech altogether. Former CIA man Don Gregg, the object of many Iran-contra accusations and Bush's foreign-policy right hand, suggested a substantial weakening of several key passages. Why give it? In one key meeting on the question, a participant said, Bush kept repeating: "We," a reference to the United States, not the Administration, "ought to have said this a long time ago."

Bush's visit to El Salvador, where he "read the riot act" about the death squads, as Morton Kondracke put it recently, is better known—and less praiseworthy. It was hardly brave in terms of domestic U.S. politics: elite opinion clamored for such a move. Nor was it exactly responsible, handing a list of individuals we wanted removed—presumably without a trial—to the leaders of another country. Can you imagine if Bush had done this to Nicaragua? If we had evidence of thuggery against the people of El Salvador, why not hand it over to their elected representatives? If their court system was too weak and corrupt to handle the prosecutions, why not help fix the court system?

Bush, however, evidently had the same thought, though the story has never fully come to light. An aide who accompanied him on the trip says that the Vice President insisted he be briefed on U.S. efforts to work with the Salvadorans against the death squads. "Seems to me," Bush said a few weeks before the trip, "that instead of wringing our hands about it or telling them what to do, we should help them do it." That's just what the Federal Bureau of Investigation was planning to do, but Bush's interest, according to one FBI agent, helped give the project a needed kick upstairs. Within a few weeks, FBI agents were in San Salvador to offer technical and operational assistance to the Salvadoran police and military. The FBI effort helped bust several death squadders, right and left. That positive effort—and not the arrogant listing of untouchables—is a major reason why Bush is thought of highly by many Salvadoran leaders.

Months after New Hampshire, Bush himself may still not realize that his victory there hinged not on a last-minute decision to attack Dole but on months of positive proposals.

These incidents suggest a couple rules of thumb about when Bush would be likely to move as President, and when he wouldn't. Rule one is that even when Bush takes a new position, it's only when different parts of the bureaucracy are nearly united in favor. Bush will go out on the point. But first you have to get a lot of experts out there. Rule two is that Bush will occasionally violate rule one—but only in an area where he strongly trusts his own judgment, which is to say, mainly in foreign affairs. That makes it harder to project a Bush presidency in terms of domestic policy. Not impossible, though.

Bush has supported a cut in the capital gains tax rate, an example that neatly fits the model. Economists who briefed Bush on the idea—Richard Rahn, William Niskanen, and Arthur Laffer—say the VP heard little dissent. "Even Marty Feldstein is in favor of that one," chortles Laffer. Nor did Bush take much convincing. An old venture capitalist himself, Bush has always understood the importance of the measure. Add to this the fact that Jack Kemp—the man Bush aides expected to be Bush's main opponent—was for it, and you had a lot of interest. Add to this the fact that the idea is popular with rich people—the kinds of people who contributed to the Bush campaign—and you've got yourself a Bush for President policy initiative.

Bush, of course, would not raise personal income tax rates. But then neither would a President Dukakis. "What Bush will do," frets a former Bush aide on domestic policy, "is spend major efforts fighting against a tax increase—constantly losing ground and giving in on energy taxes or consumption taxes or something." Reagan, by contrast, has badgered Congress with his own proposals, even into 1987 with the economic bill of rights.

With tax rates down, monetary policy is going to be one key to the economy. Here the news could be good, could be bad.

Supply-siders are hopeful because of the incremental steps toward a steady-commodity price-rule pushed by Jim Baker. On the other hand, many economists counted on Arthur Burns, chairman of the Federal Reserve under Richard Nixon, to block any inflation tight-fistedly and keep the dollar linked to gold. When trade and unemployment pressures built up in 1970 and 1971, they overwhelmed Burns. Baker is smart, but hardly as tenacious as the scrappy Fed Chairman who was rolled at Nixon's dollar-suicide summit.

Furthermore, Bush himself knows nothing about monetary policy, and what's worse, thinks it's impossible to know anything unless you're an economist. (Economists actually know less about monetary policy than most Third World mine workers or U.S. farmers, who understand inflation and deflation quite well.) Ask Bush anything about the Federal Reserve and he answers as he does on any issue he'd rather not talk about: with a name. *Conservative Digest* tossed the gold standard at him in 1986. Almost the first words Bush batted back were, "Alan Greenspan."

Greenspan and the others now at the Fed have at least a certain "institutional memory," as one supply-side economist puts it. Yet even such Fed members as Manuel Johnson and Martha Seeger continue flirting with money supply targets and other unreliable signals. And a Bush appointment or two will be critical. Greenspan, Baker, and Bush's top two economists— Feldstein and Stanford's Michael Boskin—all have career histories of leaning with the wind.

There's some danger, then, that a Bush monetary policy would once again become a tool not for promoting stable long-term prices, but for meeting other crises of the moment: trade deficit, slump in GNP, blip in the Consumer Price Index, you name it. The monetary disasters of the 1970s all came amidst repeated assurances from the Fed, Congress, and the White House that they had "learned their lessons" and would never give up "hard-won gains against inflation," and so on.

Another Bush weak spot could be a tendency to make deals with the growing movement to re-regulate the economy, starting with the banking and stock and commodities markets, but only starting. The result, as economist Mel-

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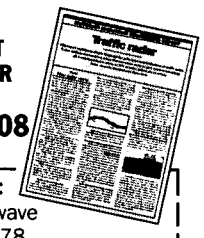

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vyn Krauss notes, would be "a piecemeal Europeanization" of the U.S. economy: rigid labor markets, growing trade and immigration controls, high unemployment, and sluggish growth. One would think Bush, who headed Reagan's panel on deregulation, would be vaccinated against this virus. Here, though, comes the other exception to the rules about Bush.

Like Reagan, Bush can be a softie for a personal friend. One of his closest, Nicholas Brady, headed the Reagan commission to examine the causes of the stock market crash. The commission recommends, among other things, a super-agency to regulate many different markets at once. It has promoted curbs on computer trading as well.

Even Reagan, who has also been known to blame economic events on irrational markets—throughout 1982, the President assured Americans that high interest rates were caused by uninformed bankers who didn't know inflation was licked—found the Brady report nonsense. White House spokesmen prepared the way for its release with several days of leaks saying the President wasn't interested in its suggestions, and the Dow-Jones was up nearly 50 points on the Friday and Monday following these stories. Brady, though, wasn't pleased, having agreed to undertake the unpleasant assignment and then finding himself slammed by a gush of leaks obviously coming from the White House. Over the weekend he spoke wth Bush at least twice—causing the VP to cancel at least one campaign appearance, according to an aide. Bush brought up the commission in a conversation with Reagan the next day, and on a Tuesday afternoon, Reagan changed his tune about the report in responding to an audience question about the economy. A large part of the reason for the crash, Reagan said, wasn't anything going on in Washington, but all those panicky brokers and their computers. The Dow plunged on news of Reagan's blame-the-silicon explanation for the crash.

None of the Brady recommendations would of itself cause a panic on Wall Street, but they all point in an unfortunate direction. Under a Bush presidency, brokers rightly fear, the bashing of stock brokers and bankers—the evil "speculators"—would become a major Potomac pastime, even as assaults on Big Oil were popular during the Energy Crisis. Editorials in the *Washington Post* would proliferate; bills would be proposed; somebody, eventually, would have to "do something," as after the market crash; negotiations would be set up; and somehow, new laws and regulations would emerge.

Indeed, one must surmise that in a Bush Administration, a lot of policies would be enacted not because anyone thinks they are good policies or even good politics, but simply because committees and bills and negotiations are set in motion and no one ever thinks to ask if maybe the train shouldn't be on an entirely different track. It's notable that every single major policy pushed by Jim Baker—the 1981 and 1986 tax bills, the Third World debt bailout plan, the trade bill—involved a large measure of corporate welfarism: hardball lobbying, lots of meetings with the wheeler dealers, favors to hand out, favors to be withdrawn. With the budget deficit, there have been fewer carrots to pass around in the form of direct federal expenditures. Yet there are other ways to "feed the hogs," as budget director David Stockman observed.

Consider the trade bill that returned from the dead. The idea was embalmed after last October 19. Financial reporters and political commentators uniformly put at least some blame for the crash on the progress of Gephardt-nomics. The main political event between the crash and the summer of 1988, meanwhile, was the crash of Gephardt himself, and every other protectionist, in the primaries. The *Wall Street Journal* editorialized on March 10, 1988: "As a political offensive, protectionism is dead." Maybe so, but in Republican administrations dominated by let's-make-a-deal types, what's politically dead today has a way of becoming policy tomorrow. "Nobody ever told Baker to stop meeting with all those senators and industry reps," a top Treasury aide says. "So he didn't. We were working on the trade bill bright and early October 20."

Bush's own role in resisting the 1988 advance of protectionism is at once more and less laudable than is known. He not only stuck with his free-trade stance in South Carolina, but did so against the strong urgings of Atwater and local politicians endorsing him in the state. On the other hand, Bush's attack on Dole and Robertson focused on their support for a separate textile bill, not the much broader mega-package being negotiated by Baker and the Administration. Indeed, Bush's language on the trade bill weakened considerably throughout the campaign. In February, he blasted "mandatory retaliation and protectionism," a phrase that could certainly be applied to, for example, the so-called Super 301 provision of the trade bill. That section requires the President to intervene every time he wants to stop a trade action now easily launched through an independent complaint office: up to 5,000 presidential sign-offs a year to stop all the trade skirmishes. By late March, however, the White House had winnowed the list of trade-bill provisions it found objectionable down to a handful, most having little to do with trade. Thus, by spring, Bush speeches had dropped the earlier billiard shot at Super 301. On March 29, Bush said only that explicit "trade barriers" would not be the "key" to reducing the trade deficit. He praised the "bitter medicine" taken by U.S. industries, and hailed the decline of the dollar, which Bush told a group in Wisconsin has been "too strong, too long."

Bush knows nothing about monetary policy and, what's worse, thinks it's impossible to know anything unless you're an economist.

Throughout, the slightest request from Bush to the President would have broadened the list of White House objections to include, say, Super 301—perhaps a statement that he was looking forward to a fall campaign against the new Smoot-Hawley party. Instead, Bush helped give away what his aide Bob Teeter has called "a great issue."

A more hopeful indicator was the Bush assault on the National Economic Commission. It's not just that Bush saw the obvious tax-and-manipulate-the-dollar bias in the commission itself: proposed by Mario Cuomo, legislated by Robert Dole, praised by George Will, and stacked with Paul Volcker and other austerians. Bush also launched into a populist political attack on the very nature of such commissions. And he didn't need to be spoonfed.

A Bush insider tells the story of how practically every adviser on the campaign was pushing for such an assault—unnecessarily. In one office, Peggy Noonan drafted several sentences on the commission for a Bush speech. In another, hours later, Bush strategists met. "Let's work something in on the commission," Teeter told an agreeable Atwater. (Teeter's interest had been caught by a column Warren Brookes had published in the *Boston Herald-American* and the *Manchester Union-Leader*, blasting the commission.) He repeated the idea a few minutes later to Noonan: Already in there, Noonan said. At about the same time, Laffer and several other issue advisers were busily leaving messages for Bush—all urging him to read a Friday column on the same subject by Paul Gigot of the *Wall Street Journal*. "The VP has already seen it," one caller was told.

On the Saturday morning of the speech, Noonan and Teeter both dashed into a limousine to go over the text with Bush. "I'd like to put in something about this tax-hike commission," Bush said, citing the Gigot column. Noonan and Teeter smiled. The veep's will was already done.

Snapshot: George Bush bounds off the plane and launches cheerfully into a standard stump speech on defense and the economy. Everything is going well enough until the Vice President comes across a quotation, inserted by speechwriter Chris Buckley, from the Greek historian and philosopher Thucydides. "As the philosopher Tudice—," Bush begins. "As the Greek philosopher Thucedidded . . . Thiduc . . . " Bush finally stumbles through the quotation without too much notice, but awkwardly.

Fast-forward to the Bush campaign plane, an hour or so later. Bush, Buckley, and Bush press aide Peter Teeley are reviewing the text for the next stop. Teeley reaches the troublesome word first. Teeley: "Oh yeah, that part. Here . . . "—Teeley scribbles something on the page, hands it to Bush— "how about this?" Bush: "Fine; good idea." Buckley looks at the draft, a bit mortified.

At the next stop, Bush sails through, up to the passage from Thucydides, still

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in the text. But this time, the Vice President introduces the quotation without a pronunciation glitch. "As the Greek philosopher Plato once said . . . "

Lee Atwater is striding out of the Old Executive Office Building one afternoon when he is accosted by an old friend, Rick Sellers. Sellers—an issue nerd and former GOP congressional candidate in Alabama, who now works for Daniel Graham's pro-Star Wars High Frontier outfit—has an idea for the Bush campaign.

Atwater, hurried, listens impatiently as Sellers outlines his strategy to use SDI as a Bush vote-getter. By stressing the difference between Republicans and Democrats on this popular issue, he argues, Bush can pick up a number of votes from women, pro-defense Democrats, you name it. (A recent poll by the *Los Angeles Times*, not published when Sellers talked to Atwater, suggests that about half of all voters leaning to the Democrats might vote Republican on the issue of Star Wars.)

Sellers waits for a reaction. Atwater ponders.

"What I don't understand is how this is going to get us votes," Atwater says. "Dukakis is to the left of us on SDI, and you're telling us to move further to the right?"

If there is any formulation Reaganites chafe under, it is the old left-right spectrum, a concept that, albeit useful in some ways, has clouded thinking on issue after issue. Way back in the 1970s, Henry Kissinger observed that the Nixon Administration might have won more support for the Vietnam war by "moving to the right." That is, people resisted dying in a losing cause. A serious U.S. effort at victory, by contrast, might have proved much more popular. Arthur Laffer puts it this way: "If one guy proposes a 30 percent tax cut, and the other proposes research into whether it's feasible to have a 30 percent tax cut, who would you vote for?" The research position is more "moderate." But the cut-taxes position is more likely to convince voters that the issue is vital. If it's something they feel strongly about, their vote swings—as did millions of blue-collar ballots in 1980 and 1984.

Of the top Bush aides, only Pinkerton, Richard Darman, and Bob Teeter seem capable of leaping beyond The Spectrum in discussing policy. "It's funny, because Teeter is a pollster," says one Bush staffer. "But he's no Dick Wirthlin; he's not trapped by his poll numbers." For example, Teeter has urged Bush to stick with a clean line on free trade. Even though poll after poll suggests to politicians like Connally and Gephardt that protectionism is a winning issue, Teeter knows that there is a difference between how people answer a poll and how they sift issues in a campaign. "Protectionism," Teeter told one happily surprised economist, "wins polls and loses elections." Sometimes "to move to the center" is simply another way of saying, "to concede your opponent's premise."

Two promising strains to emerge from the Bush campaign, particularly after the veep's Super-Southern-Sweep: a proposal to make a concerted GOP appeal to blacks, and Bush's continued harping on the damage wreaked by the Imperial Congress on every issue from the budget deficit to foreign policy. Yet on these, too, the good news comes with some bad.

Under a Bush presidency, brokers rightly fear, the bashing of stockbrokers and bankers would become a major Potomac pastime.

"When Bush says reach out to blacks," Hoover Institution scholar Thomas Sowell noted recently, "I'm afraid he means he's going to ask black people to vote for Republicans, no more." The idea of proposing policies—for example, the education voucher that more than 65 percent of black voters say they favor—somehow hasn't penetrated the Bush campaign.

Let's consider Joseph Perkins of the *Wall Street Journal* as he described one Bush-to-blacks reachout speech, taking it line by line:

"The vice president promised to 'restore and reinvigorate' the Commerce Department's Office of Minority Business Enterprise," Perkins writes. (The what?) "That's well enough, but Mr. Bush will have to go much further to win black support." (Sure will. What else does he say?) "He says he will work to improve the quality of education black children receive," Perkins continues, "and that he will target certain black school districts." (Likely reply by governor of Massachusetts: Too bad your Administration has opposed such spending for years. Voters who want *real* increases in spending should vote for me, Mike Dukakis.) "He also says," Perkins writes, "he will work to support black families by insisting that absentee fathers fulfill their responsibility to their children." (A good idea that virtually no politician has ever opposed, but that Bush hereby tacitly concedes hasn't been implemented in the ninety-plus months of the Reagan-*Bush* Administration.) "And he says that he will make his attorney general accountable for civil rights enforcement." (The present one isn't? Then why vote for Ronald Reagan's Vice President?)

Perkins closes: "To this agenda, he should add: welfare reform, education vouchers, residential management of public housing, and criminal sentencing reform." But will he?

Congress is a similar theme in the Bush campaign—a potentially momentous issue, but also a potential dud. For all the talk of Bush pursuing a "Harry Truman" strategy, as Pat Buchanan urges, the fact is that this idea, indeed the very same words, were employed by the Nixon campaign in 1972, by Carter in 1980, and by Reagan in 1984. Presidents always run against Congress, both as a means of securing their own election and in hopes of increasing their party's power in the House and Senate. The effort is successful only when voters are told what the new Congress will do that the old one hasn't.

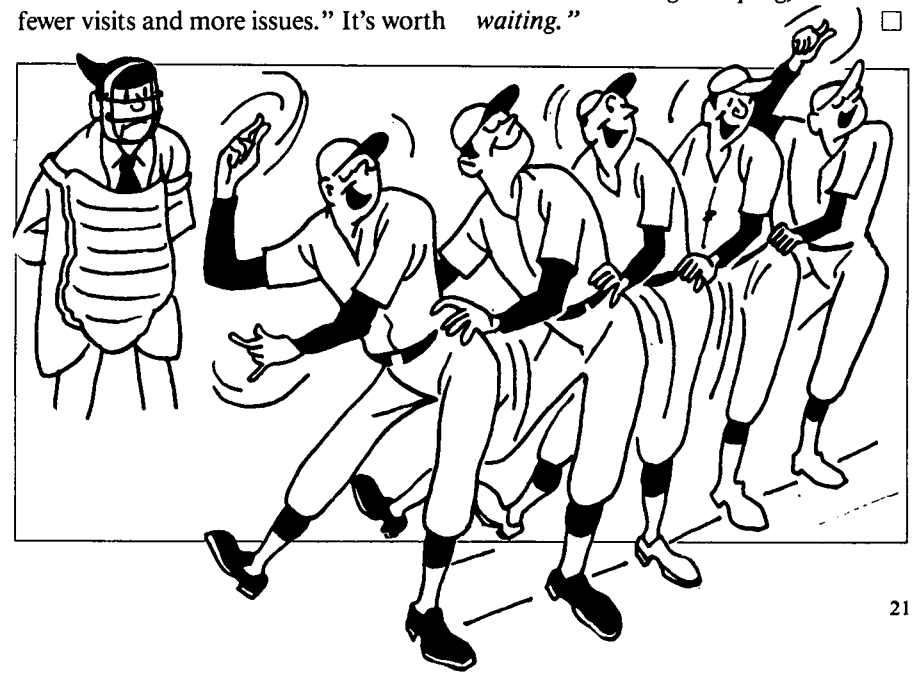
FDR, for example, thumped mercilessly on Republicans who dragged feet on the New Deal. Truman called a special session of Congress after the 1948 convention to force the reluctant legislature to act on a number of bills. By contrast, Reagan banged his head against the "tax-and-spend" Democrats for years, with steadily diminishing returns. In 1986, Reagan flew all over the country—where, at many stops, he sought to help Republican candidates whose election voters had no reason to think would make any great difference. California Senate candidate Ed Zschau (whose two main TV spots lashed out against drugs and the deficit) lost by a razor margin to incumbent Alan Cranston in that race. Yet Reagan blanketed the state for him. As Zschau recently told a group of Republican supporters: "In retrospect, we [Zschau and other GOP candidates] would have been a lot better off with fewer visits and more issues." It's worth noting that several 1986 Senate candidates who tried to establish themselves as distinctive in terms of issues—Wisconsin's Robert Kasten as a leader on tax reform, Idaho's Steve Symms and Missouri's Kit Bond as advocates of SDI deployment—survived the Democratic Senate landslide. "If George Bush wants to help himself and Republican candidates," Zschau commented recently in his slot as a San Francisco-area TV analyst, "he'll be setting forth an agenda, talking about the future, and soon." That was in March.

At least some Bush aides have an inkling. It's Bush's legal staff, headed by C. Boyden Gray, that has done the serious thinking on the Congress issue. Gray gave a brilliant speech on the Imperial Congress at a recent conference of the American Enterprise Institute. He and others clearly seem to understand that an effective campaign against Congress will involve multiple proposals; a solid bank of research; and a willingness to point out, on issue after issue, how even Democrats who may support an item veto or a sound SDI program are part of their party's inescapable ethos of budget overruns and dovish foreign policy. Yet, there is scant evidence that Gray's insights have animated the Bush campaign, and time runs short.

Snapshot . . . "All right, I'll boil it down for you." Bush is talking to a group of Californians who have "maxed out," giving the largest legally allowable contribution possible to his campaign. "I'm going to demand a line-item veto and I'm going to stick with it."

A man seated in the audience asks, "What about this argument in the Wall Street Journal *that you already have a line-item veto? It seems very solid. Why hasn't the President done anything? Why haven't you done anything?"*

"We're going to look into that," Bush promised. "You bet we are." The conversation was in early 1988. This May, the businessman commented: "I'm still waiting. Hoping, but still waiting." □



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Sidney Hook

MEMORIES OF YADDO: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL POSTSCRIPT

A distinguished philosopher recalls the early days of a writers' colony where anti-capitalism flourished in plush surroundings.

I have never regarded myself as a wit or as a master of one-line repartee. But several times as a consequence of innocent or naive remarks, I have enjoyed a brief reputation as a formidable swordsman in the give and take of rejoinder. It didn't seem to improve anyone's liking for me but gave me immunity from the verbal horseplay in which literary intellectuals engage before establishing the pecking order whenever they appear as a group. My first experience of this occurred during the summers of 1931 and 1932 at Yaddo, the colony in east central New York state set up for writers and artists at the palatial mansion of Katherine Trask as a memorial to her by her devoted husband and life-long admirer, the capitalist-philanthropist Peabody.

Morris R. Cohen had spent a summer there, as had my friend Ernest Nagel, and I suppose I owed my invitation to their recommendation. It was a beautiful estate. All the needs of the guests with the exception of laundry were provided for by a large staff. Everything was grown on the estate and prepared by excellent chefs. Every guest had a large room in the mansion, or a spacious, well-appointed cabin if he or she was a painter or musician. I had the Tower Room in the main house, which commanded a magnificent view. It was my first taste of luxury, and was surpassed only by my experience at the Rockefeller Villa Serbelloni, another center for creative labor, years later. I completed a draft of my *Towards the Understanding of Karl Marx* at Yaddo as the capitalist system in the United States tottered towards total ruin.

During my first stay, on the opening day when we were assembled at the welcoming get-together, taking one another's measure in the typical fashion of creative and critical "intellectuals," some brash writer, apropos of some observation I made, cocked his head, and sardonically said: "Methinks I have read that somewhere." To which I replied, in all innocence, "I am not surprised. I published it last week." (I no longer remember where.) This was considered, I was told, a devastating retort. At the same meeting, approaching us from the distant cabin to which she had been assigned, was a latecomer. She was a very attractive young woman who, I later learned, was very much interested in the theory of architecture, and under the influence of Lewis Mumford. She was walking barefoot on tiptoe, and making slow progress. I naively wondered aloud: "Does the poor girl suffer from fallen arches?" At this everyone collapsed into convulsions of laughter. I seemed the only one unaware of the fact that her mode of walking had become the rage at Radcliffe, Smith, Mt. Holyoke, and other elite institutions for young women. It was assumed that my question was a witty way of pillorying the practice—something altogether absent from my mind. From that time on I was never the butt of any wisecracks and jeering criticisms the creative male spirits periodically directed against each other.

Although not related to Yaddo, another occasion comes to mind when a naive question and an honest answer produced unexpected effects. In the mid-forties, when Communist influence was still riding high in Hollywood in the wake of the euphoria of the U.S.-USSR co-belligerency against Nazi Germany and just before the Kremlin resumed its cold war against the West, I was invited by Morrie Ryskind to give a talk on Communism and Art. My lecture was somewhat abstract, based as it was on Soviet theoretical writings. Most of my concrete examples were drawn from the long and sorry history of Soviet repression of the arts and the extravaganzas of socialist realism. The question period was somewhat desultory until a gray-haired lady, who was later identified to me as the mother of Ginger Rogers, rose and angrily asked: "All you say is well and good, but what about Gregory Peck?" To which I answered, as I strode forward to hear her response, "And pray, *who* is Gregory Peck?" At which the audience broke into loud and tumultuous applause. Only a former student of mine at NYU, Ozzie Caswell, who had left the purlieus of the academy for the anticipated fame and fortune of writing music for Hollywood, and who was sitting in the balcony, realized that at the time I really didn't know who Gregory Peck was, and what his political connections were.

Taken that night or the day after to some famous eating place with an odd name—The Brown Derby—I upset my hosts by an honest answer to a question unexpectedly asked of me by one of the women at our crowded dinner table. An extraordinarily beautiful young woman had approached, been duly introduced, and had chatted gaily with some of my companions. As she turned away and was no longer in earshot, one of my table partners asked me whether I thought the young woman had a great deal of sex appeal. Her question seemed to get the attention of everyone, and all eyes turned to me. Thoughtlessly but honestly, I answered: "I don't know. I'm still in love with my wife." At which, after a pause, some of the women turned furiously on their husbands and I heard variations of the shrill complaint, "I'll bet *you* would never have said that!" It was all rather embarrassing because some of the men later implied that my remark was made with malicious intent.

To return to the days of Yaddo, it was my reputation not as a wit that counted during those summers but

Sidney Hook's autobiography, Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the 20th Century, *was published last year by Harper & Row.*

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as the leading authority on Marxism and Communism. In short order almost all the guests became Marxists and Communist fellow-travelers of a sort. Musicians, painters, poets, dramatists, even members of the staff of the director, Mrs. Elizabeth Ames, rushed to embrace Marxism and Communism as if they were a species of religion. No one can understand this phenomenon who is unaware of the psychological mood generated by the depths of the economic depression. There were no viable alternatives of belief available on the domestic scene. Only the rosy propaganda of a planned society with no unemployment, circulated by the Soviet regime and disseminated by credulous pilgrims to the Soviet Union against the growing thunder of German Fascism, seemed believable. Meanwhile every frustration or loss, every absence of opportunity or failure of effort when opportunity was present, could be blamed on capitalism.

To be sure, there were various degrees of understanding and dedication among the neophytes to Communism. The way Lionel Trilling, with whom I had long talks on the subject, understood Communism was different from the way Marc Blitzstein, the musician, or Anton Refrigier, the artist, understood it. It was already clear in those days that there was a profound division within the mass movement to belief in the promised future. There were those who were seeking a transcendent faith that could withstand "the niggling criticism" of skeptics, as well as the "lies" of the bourgeois press. On the other hand there were those who saw in Communism primarily the hope for a better life and a higher culture and whose minds were open to evidence. The novelist Josephine Herbst, for example, was already among the faithful and would growl uneasily when, while defending the ideals of Marx and Marxism, I would criticize specific policies of the American and Russian Communist parties.

Although playing the role of St. Paul to the Gentiles, I could not suppress my heresies about the central dogmas of historical materialism and the class struggle, both of which I interpreted in a pragmatic and pluralistic fashion. In this way, I became more effective in stilling the doubts of those whose new faith had not yet eroded their critical intelligence. Oddly enough, most of those at Yaddo who were drawn to the Communist movement by my criticisms of the capitalist status quo and my expositions of Marxism remained faithful Stalinists when I took the field openly against the Communist movement at home and abroad after Stalin helped Hitler come to power in 1933.

There were some exceptions to the mass conversions to Communism among the literati at Yaddo in the summers of 1931 and 1932. The most notable, as I recall, was Evelyn Scott, who had won some notoriety for her largely autobiographical *Escapade*. She was an attractive woman of great vivacity married to, or living with, a taciturn Englishman, also in residence, who was engaged in a study of Husserl, an unusual theme in that period for English philosophers. (His name escapes me.) I regret not getting to know them better. Evelyn Scott and I took an instant dislike to each other. She called herself an anarchist, which brought out my fiercest polemical instincts and blinded me to the fact that what the term probably meant to *her* was a courageous defiance of convention—which I really admired—and not a theory, which I detested, about the desirability of a complete absence of government. As I was to learn in a Truth Game we were to play—about which more later—she regarded me as something of an intellectual bully for resorting to argument when views were advanced as an expression of sentiment.

The question period was somewhat desultory until a gray-haired lady, who was later identified to me as the mother of Ginger Rogers, rose and angrily asked: "All you say is well and good, but what about Gregory Peck?"

I have gone through many changes in thought, but from the time I began to think until today I have been an unalterable opponent of anarchism, which I have invariably found the last ideological rampart of socially irresponsible individuals and causes, including the many self-confused persons who preface their remarks with the disarming statement: "At heart I am really a philosophical anarchist."

As a young Socialist I was predisposed against anarchism because of its association with violence and the reaction it provoked, which often swept away the gradual reforms that had been so painfully won against the weight of tradition and lethargy. As a democrat, I had always been suspicious of anarchist critics who thundered about the tyranny of the majority, since the historical record revealed that human beings more often suffered from the tyranny of minorities and individuals than from the tyranny of majorities. Of course, majorities are not necessarily right and can do foolish and unjust things. But as Justice Frankfurter once put it, in a democracy the appeal from an unenlightened majority must be made to an enlightened majority and not a self-denominated enlightened minority or individual. This was certainly Jefferson's view. It was Lincoln who recognized that democracy was the only alternative to anarchy and despotism. And long before Lincoln, Aristotle taught that anarchy was the rule of a thousand despots. That is why if human beings are confronted with a choice between anarchy and despotism, they will prefer the latter.

The fatal flaw in every anarchist theory is the assumption that human beings can live for long without the emergence of some form of government or state power that enjoys within the community an ultimate monopoly of force. The view that human beings are by nature good and reasonable creatures who can compose their differences peacefully is incompatible with what we know of human behavior in recorded history. It is starkly utopian. Just as utopian are the views of those who believe that human conflicts arise only or primarily from conflicts over property and other material interests, and that where there are no conflicts over material possessions there is therefore no need or justification for the state. This was Marx's view, and is implied in the position of Jefferson and Madison. "If men were angels," wrote Madison, "they would have no need of government," presumably because having no bodies, they would have no material needs or interests.

Madison could not be more wrong, and it is surprising that he should have forgotten so completely his Milton, who chronicles in poetry the revolt of Lucifer, as well as the hierarchies of order and power recognized in traditional angelology. Human beings, who are far from being angels, will fight over degrees of authority, of power, prestige, and precedence, over honor and love as well as over material things, even if not as often or always to the same degree.

Today every lapsed totalitarian poses as an anarchist to mask his anti-Americanism. Even those who glorify civil disobedience with respect to some special interest are insensitive to the fact that if civil disobedience were to become general—and human beings obeyed only the laws they morally approved—society would soon fall into a state of civil war. Order can exist without justice and freedom, as we well know, but justice and freedom cannot exist without order. On this rock every variety of anarchism founders.

There was one other disheartening discovery or rediscovery I made at Yaddo, and this was the bestiality of males under the influence of liquor. There were a lot of complaints by the guests those early years at Yaddo. Mrs. Ames had married a soldier later killed in the First World War and was an unhappy widow. She became involved with a man whose wife was in a mental institution and for obscure legal reasons couldn't divorce her. The result

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seemed to be a definite partiality on Mrs. Ames's part towards unhappily married men and, during the two summers I was there, a rather close surveillance of the sexual behavior of the guests, justified by the necessity of allaying the gossip in Saratoga Springs that Yaddo had become a center of free love which might affect its tax status as a cultural institution. (I was always suspicious of the importance of the alleged gossip in view of the history of Saratoga Springs as a health resort and horse racing center.) All this, of course, was to change with the passage of years, but I am writing about 1931 and 1932.

The guests were there voluntarily. They could have left any time if they felt dissatisfied. They were informed of the rules when they arrived. It was expected that the creative artists and thinkers would remain in their studies (unless they came in for the daily gourmet lunch) until four p.m. The cocktail hour was at six and dinner for which everyone dressed informally was at seven. Sometimes there was a meeting after dinner. There was of course widespread prowling at night by males, but if it was discreet and noiseless, there were no repercussions. I know of only one guest who was asked to leave and that must have been for some egregiously scandalous reason, for shortly afterward he tried to throw the pilot out of a local airplane he had hired, and was committed.

The four p.m. rule was not strictly enforced, but I thought it had a good effect in that everyone admitted that he got work done. The food was too rich for some of us, and I remember once going into Saratoga Springs just to have a plate of plain corned beef and cabbage. But nothing that we had to endure justified the action one night of about a dozen male guests led by a soused short-story writer from Oklahoma. They urinated in the stone urns containing the choice flowers cultivated at Yaddo, and with muffled cries of "Down with capitalism"—muffled so as not to be heard by the night watchman—pushed one of these huge urns off its ledge to be shattered below. The next night we heard that some vandals had invaded the place. The episode revolted me, partly because of a sense of guilt in being an observer and a kind of silent accomplice, and because of doubts it raised in my mind about the kind of society these converts to the new faith would develop. Needless to say Lionel Trilling was not one of them.

There was one occasion in which we were properly punished for our lack of spirit in protesting against Mrs. Ames's impositions. I'm sure Evelyn Scott was not there at the time. Mrs. Ames announced a cultural evening at which her sister, Marjorie, would sing and read some poetry. Marjorie was Mr. Peabody's favorite, we were told, and Mr. Peabody was the Maecenas of Yaddo. We all felt obliged to attend. Marjorie's thin voice could be endured, but when she began to read her poetry all of us were seized with a convulsive fit of laughter that could only be controlled by physical contortion and permanent damage to our insides. It would have been healthier if we had all exploded because Mrs. Ames, I suspect, knew how we felt but was doing her duty by Mr. Peabody and her sister.

One evening we played the game of Truth. And after observing its consequences I have never played it again. A person is selected or volunteers to leave the room. Each one of those remaining then writes a sentence which he believes truly characterizes the person who has left the room. After all the sentences have been written, their subject is called back. Each sentence is then read aloud, and the subject is required to guess who penned it. I volunteered to be "it." The first sentence about me that was read out ran "A Socratic Mantis" and I correctly guessed Evelyn Scott (as I did the authors of all the other characterizations of me). Evelyn Scott declared I was psychic, but that reflected her own naiveté. I suppose my ego was so strong that I didn't mind the "truths" uttered about me, not even Evelyn's dagger thrust. But as others left the room and the game continued the atmosphere became increasingly pained and painful. When Marc Blitzstein was out, I thought I would say something to his credit and wrote, "A musical reed that will bend to the passing wind but will never break." He failed to identify the writer and when I owned up he stalked over to me, burst into tears, and exclaimed: "Is that what you really think of me? And I considered you my friend." He had completely misunderstood my meaning, taking what I wrote as a charge of opportunism. The game broke up at that point and was never resumed.

There was one other disheartening discovery or rediscovery I made at Yaddo, and this was the bestiality of males under the influence of liquor.

I had become quite friendly with Marc Blitzstein because he helped me to conduct a musical experiment. I had become acutely aware of my lack of sensibility with respect to the interpretation of music and painting. I envied the keenness of musical perception which enabled a musical critic to declare that Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* was pantheistic rather than Christian or critics of modern painting to see what I could not by invoking a recondite symbolism. I had read somewhere a learned essay contending that musical tones had intrinsic meanings, which was reminiscent of the claims of some early nineteenth-century German *Naturphilosophen* that certain colors had intrinsic meanings. With Blitzstein's help we selected a dozen or so little known musical passages. He played them before the sophisticated Yaddo audience with the request that its members indicate the meanings, if any, they associated with the music. The results showed that there was the widest variation imaginable, except with some correlations on the rhythms. No one would characterize a lively tune as funereal. But a slow movement could suggest the most disparate meanings, which was no surprise to anyone who knew that the music of a Christmas carol was also the music of the English revolutionary song "The People's Flag."

I managed to assuage Marc Blitzstein's feelings that I had betrayed him in my effort to stress his sensitivity, but he remained distrustful. The last time we met was by chance in a New York subway train after the American Workers' party was founded and he was in the close embrace of the Communist party. When I offered him a copy of the program of the American Workers' party he rejected it with a smile saying: "You can't influence me anymore, Sidney."

Someone who stayed out of the Truth game at Yaddo was Marion Greenwood, a very talented painter whose striking and luscious beauty provoked unjustifiable doubts about her capacities. She had droll tales to tell about distinguished guests in past summers who had tried to pull her down during the postprandial walks that were a common exercise. "This is the bush behind which I fought Waldo Frank off," she would say. It was clear that she didn't fight everyone off. She asked me to sit for my portrait and I consented. Without abbreviating the size of my nose, she did an interesting study of me which everyone recognizes although some think it is too flattering. When she was through, she said to me as if bestowing an accolade: "You are the only man who sat for me who hasn't made a pass at me." I couldn't claim any special virtue for that because at the time I was head over heels in love with someone even more beautiful!

To my astonishment, I learned many years later in a biography of Josephine Herbst that she and Marion Greenwood were lovers. I have long since given up the attempt to understand such things. If true, all I can say is: What a waste!

After I left Yaddo I did not keep in touch with Mrs. Ames and developments there. I know she moved progressively to the left politically and learned that Yaddo had become a kind of winter hide-out for Agnes Smedley, a dedicated Communist fellow-traveler at the time and an early supporter of Mao Tse-tung and the Chinese Communists who, Miss Smedley certainly knew, were *not* merely "agrarian reformers." There was some kind of official investigation that cleared Mrs. Ames. Long before this I had concluded on the basis of their membership in certain political groups that one of Mrs. Ames's secretaries and her husband had become Communists without knowing too much about the subject of Communism. Impressed and persuaded by a succession of distinguished guests that Communism was coming, in their simple-minded way they took out what they probably thought was an insurance policy and joined the Communist party, and became involved in activities that ultimately attracted the attention of state and federal authorities. □

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William Tucker

OUR HOMESTEAD PLAN FOR THE POOR

Welfare reform will come to no good unless it allows the underclass to work *and* have families.

Perhaps no problem poses a greater danger to the future of American society than the emergence of a seemingly permanent "underclass" built around the single-parent, female-headed household. Previous generations of Americans have known poverty, but to none did it seem so hopeless. All saw America as a land of opportunity, and even among the poor there was a strong sense that hard work and long-term effort would pay off—which, with astonishing regularity, it did. The experience of recent immigrant groups, most notably Asians, proves that the system still works. But among today's underclass, particularly among American blacks, efforts at improvement seem to lead backwards. For the underclass, things are actually worse now than they were twenty-five years ago, when the most concentrated attempts in our history to remove institutional racism began.

The litany of problems in black, lower-class communities needs no introduction. Half of all black children are now being raised in single-parent homes—up from 20 percent in 1960. Almost 60 percent of black babies are born illegitimate. These "welfare families" form a solid core of poverty around which a tangle of pathologies cluster.

More and more, poor blacks are becoming irrevocably alienated from the mainstream of American culture. Crime rates soar. Children bring guns to school. Youngsters who try to do well at school are ostracized by their peers for "acting white." Drug dealers run neighborhood empires, using the shield of the juvenile-justice laws to arm teenage couriers with automatic weapons. Several cities—Detroit, Washington, and Los Angeles, for example—have undergone "murder explosions," where rates of mortality among youth gangs suddenly approach the levels of guerrilla combat.

Meanwhile, the black family continues to disintegrate. The *Wall Street Journal* recently visited a Los Angeles high school where one-quarter of the female student body gives birth *every year.* Across the country, many urban schools have given up all pretense of maintaining moral behavior and are turning themselves into day-care centers.

What is going on here? How did this disintegration of family life—truly unprecedented in history—ever occur? And since black teenagers now have the highest rate of fertility in the world—almost nine times that of some Western populations and four times the rate of middle-class blacks alone—how long will it be before such anti-family, anti-social behavior completely overwhelms our society?

For many years, the standard explanation was that the black family was destroyed during slavery and never recovered. Daniel Patrick Moynihan worked from this premise in his 1965 *Report on the Black Family,* which first raised alarms about the growing black matriarchy. Moynihan was concerned because black female-headed households had reached 20 percent. (This is now the rate for all families.)

The argument that slavery is at the root of black family problems has since been discredited. In a remarkable piece of scholarship, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom* (1976), historian Herbert Gutman proved that the black family remained intact throughout slavery and long thereafter. Using plantation ledgers that meticulously recorded births and marriages, Gutman showed that the vast majority of blacks—about 75 percent—lived in stable, monogamous, two-parent families throughout slavery. Slaves practiced their own marital restrictions (no cross-cousin marriages) and had their own wedding ceremonies ("jumping the broomstick"). After Emancipation, nearly all these slave marriages were legally sanctioned by Reconstruction authorities. In one year alone—1866—60 percent of the adult female population of several Southern counties were legally married before civil officials.

This same pattern persisted right up through 1925 (when Gutman, perplexingly, ends his study). In cities both North and South, the majority of blacks lived in two-parent homes. The percentage of single mothers was always a little higher than among whites—about 20 percent as opposed to 10 percent in the general population—but this seems to have been due to higher rates of widowhood. A 1905 survey of 15,000 recently immigrated black families in New York found only *one* woman heading a single-parent family with more than two children. The contemporary phenomenon of the "welfare mother," who has a string of four-to-six children fathered by a variety of men without ever marrying, was virtually unknown.

In another much-discussed analysis, William Julius Wilson, a University of Chicago sociologist, argues in *The Truly Disadvantaged*[1] that "structural unemployment" has been the deciding factor in the disintegration of poor black families. Wilson maintains that the American economy has been buffeted by "severe economic downturns" and "a decline in manufacturing industries" over the last twenty years, which have unduly affected black men. The loss of income has made black men less attractive marriage partners for black women, leading to a decline in family formation.

A somewhat different explanation has been offered by journalist Nicholas Lemann in "The Origins of the Underclass," a two-part series in the *Atlantic*

William Tucker is The American Spectator*'s New York correspondent.*

[1] *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy.* University of Chicago Press, $19.95.

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in 1986. Lemann argues that the underclass already existed among black tenant farmers in the South. Illegitimacy was common and "marriage ceremonies little observed" among lower-class blacks, he says. Sharecroppers were economically dependent on "the big house"—meaning the white landowner. "The people on welfare [today are] primarily children of sharecroppers from what Southern blacks call 'the rural.' " Lemann traces the origin of today's urban underclass to two migrations: (1) the migration of Southern black sharecroppers to the North in the fifties and sixties, and (2) the subsequent exodus of the black middle class from urban ghettos made possible by open-housing laws. Wilson also cites the later migration. Ironically, both authors conclude that it was the very success of suburban open-housing that led to the isolation and deterioration of lower-class black life in the central cities.

Although in some ways mutually contradictory, these efforts by Wilson and Lemann have persuaded most liberal scholars that an explanation for the rise of the underclass has been found. I will not spend too much time detailing the weaknesses of these two theses, since they should be plain enough.

The central problem with Wilson's argument is that it attributes a virtually unprecedented social disaster to an almost routine historical event. Civilizations have been living with unemployment throughout history. Does anyone seriously believe that the "economic buffets" of the sixties and seventies were worse than those of the 1930s? And why would high unemployment lead to a failure in family formation anyway? Do either men or women feel they would be better off by not getting married? Even amid the worst economic distresses, there has never been an instance where the majority of an underemployed population abandoned marriage and reverted to single-parent, female-headed households.

As for Lemann's explanation, there is simply no historical evidence for it. Numerous accounts show that Southern black sharecroppers lived pretty much the way white sharecroppers did—large families, certainly, but intact husband-and-wife families all the same. As a civil rights worker in the 1960s, I visited hundreds of sharecropper cabins in Mississippi and Alabama and recall hardly ever encountering a female-headed household. To be sure, there were often teenage daughters around with illegitimate children, but these were always part of an extended household. Sharecropping demanded intense physical labor, and I doubt if a landowner would even lease land to a sharecropping family that did not have an adult male present.

Lemann's argument is merely a muddled resurrection of the old argument that the black family was destroyed during slavery. Not surprisingly, he is entirely ignorant of Gutman's work. Instead he tries to settle the issue with one third-hand account from the 1930s that marriages were often "arranged by plantation owners" during slavery. (Gutman shows this was extremely rare.) Black sharecroppers may have been a peasantry, but they were a peasantry no different from thousands of others around the world. They worked hard and formed stable families. In fact—as Wilson and Lemann are both aware—recent research has shown that black Southern migrants actually do better than native northern blacks at getting jobs and establishing stable lives when they first come North—a reversal of the usual immigrant pattern. Only as they absorb the urban welfare culture do their lives begin to deteriorate.

What most welfare reformers don't want to discuss is that workfare will do nothing to put the black family back together.

Although it's difficult to remember now, one of the major social stigmas attached to blacks in the 1930s was not that they "wouldn't work" but that they were *too willing to work*. As late as 1948, black teenage unemployment was actually lower than white teenage unemployment. In *The State Against Blacks*, Walter Williams cites a 1910 study showing labor-force participation by 71 percent of the black population *over nine years old*, as opposed to only 51 percent among whites.

Historically, blacks were known as people who would underbid professional carpenters and plumbers, who were non-unionized labor, and who would take factory jobs at wages most whites would disdain. Black "strikebreakers" were one of the major impediments to unionization—and in fact many early union contracts specifically excluded hiring black labor.

A large item on the congressional agenda during the 1930s was thus to restrict the employment of "cheap" black labor. The initial effort was the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931—a piece of legislation that in many ways foreshadowed the New Deal. During the 1920s, northern builders found they could avoid high labor-union costs by putting together itinerant crews of Southern blacks. Construction unions, finding themselves out-competed, ran to Congress requesting a law that would require federally funded projects to pay "prevailing union wages." As the federal government has extended its reach, the impact of this law has spread.

The congressional debates over Davis-Bacon made it explicit that black labor was the target. Today, the law's effects remain much the same. For instance, House of Umoja, a black self-help organization in Philadelphia, put its entire membership of young ex-delinquents to work in 1983 building its Martin Luther King Center with a grant from CBS. In 1985, when House of Umoja began building its Marcus Garvey Business Development Center, it received a federal grant. "We found that under Davis-Bacon, we couldn't hire our own members to do most construction jobs," said Sister Falaka Fattah, the founder of House of Umoja. "Instead, we were required to hire union labor." Thus, the entire purpose of the project—giving young blacks some work experience—was defeated by federal law.

The same protections against "cheap labor" was extended by the New Deal into almost every walk of life. In areas where federal rules could not reach, states and municipalities were encouraged to set up licensing boards and regulatory bodies to "protect the public interest"—and of course limit competition. The minimum wage was the capstone to this effort. Only this year the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the latest proposal to raise the minimum wage would destroy 500,000 jobs, most of them held by low-wage black teenagers.

Elsewhere, unions have been left with enormous control over the labor market. They "regulate themselves"—which means, of course, awarding jobs to relatives and friends, with turf wars and nepotism governing the marketplace. The results are often astonishing. In *The State Against Blacks*, Williams chronicles how blacks have been excluded from almost every manner of trade and small business by union and government regulations. After the Civil War, the construction trades were filled with black workers, particularly in the South. But licensing procedures and unionization gradually pushed them out; by 1969, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers had a 1.9 percent black membership, the International Plumbers and Pipefitters 0.6 percent.

In the moving business, blacks have done well at the local level but are virtually excluded from the more lucrative interstate market by the Interstate Commerce Commission. The ICC granted 16,000 permits for interstate moving in 1935 and 13,000 remain today, with only a handful of new licenses granted. Consequently, less than 1 percent are held by blacks. One successful black-owned moving company in Kansas City spent twenty years and $300,000 in legal fees trying to get the ICC to grant it an interstate license.

This same situation is repeated in areas like union hiring, taxi licensing, and civil-service procedures. In all my years of walking the streets of New York City, I have never seen a black or Puerto Rican garbage man. Another notable example is Carnegie Hall, which operates with eleven stagehands, all of whom make more than $90,000 in salary and overtime. The work could be done just as well, if not better, by forty stagehands making $20,000 a year. But the father-and-son Theatrical

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Stage Employees (mostly made up of Bronx Irish families) controls hiring.

Blacks made several attempts to get inside the tent by forming their own unions, but were almost always blocked by white-dominated unions and regulatory bodies. When the National Mediation Board was formed in 1934, one of its first actions was to outlaw a union of black railroad workers formed to oppose white-dominated unions that were forcing blacks out of railroad jobs.

"Affirmative action" has essentially been a belated effort to force more black hirings through a union-dominated system. But for the most part, because unions, licensing boards, and civil-service procedures form a discriminatory barrier, blacks remain out in the cold.

Thus when Wilson, Lemann, and others blame "structural unemployment" for the unusual difficulties of contemporary blacks, they are not entirely wrong. But they don't recognize the causes. Both Wilson and Lemann say that structural unemployment is natural to a free-market system. It isn't. As Walter Williams argues, it has been the restriction of the labor market through government intervention, rather than any failures of capitalism, that has led to "structural" black unemployment.

Under these changing circumstances, it was more than likely that pressures building up in the black community would find some outlet. It was finally found—unfortunately—in an obscure portion of the Social Security Act of 1935. Besides setting up nationwide old age benefits, funded through workers' contributions, the Social Security Act also created four small pension programs for non-workers deemed the "deserving poor": (1) the elderly who had not built a sufficient work record, (2) the blind, (3) the disabled, and (4) widows and orphans. The last category was called "aid to dependent children."

The first three programs still pay out small pensions to qualifying people with low incomes. About 1.5 million elderly receive pensions totaling $3 billion a year. About 2.5 million disabled receive $8 billion a year, and another 82,000 blind people receive $264 million a year.

But the "widows and orphans" program—now called Aid to Financially Dependent Children (AFDC)—has exploded in a manner no one ever imagined. According to the original regulations, a child became eligible if he lost one parent. It was assumed this meant by death. By the late forties, however, the Truman Administration discovered that some states were allowing divorced women to collect AFDC where alimony payments were not being made. This led to a flurry of efforts to redefine the program, but nothing came of it. Then in the 1950s, many states began extending AFDC to *illegitimate* children whose mothers had never married. Most of the recipients were black.

This development raised grave concerns in the Kennedy Administration that AFDC was "breaking up families," or even encouraging illegitimacy.

The dirty little secret among welfare reformers right now is that they have essentially given up on black men.

So the administration tried to remove any disincentives by extending AFDC to intact families where the breadwinner was unemployed. This effort, however, was soon overrun by a campaign initiated within Community Action—a Great Society agency—encouraging unmarried mothers to "demand their rights" to be put on the welfare rolls. A series of court suits knocked down the few methods by which the states had tried to limit access to AFDC. (A one-year residency requirement was the most common qualifier.) Thus, the way was opened for full statutory use of the welfare system by unmarried mothers.

Over the brief period 1967-1970—as the civil rights revolution crested and the economy neared full employment—the national percentage of eligible single black mothers on welfare zoomed from 62 to 91 percent. Welfare rolls burgeoned from 4.4 million in 1965 to 9.7 million in 1970 and the percentage of female-headed households among blacks rose from 24 percent to 31 percent. With no relation whatsoever to the nearly full-employment economy, the "welfare culture" of single-parent households quickly became the norm in low-income black communities. Almost by accident, the small widows-and-orphans pension of the New Deal had become America's family policy.

For a while America did have another kind of family policy, through the income-tax deduction. As economist Eugene Steuerle pointed out in *Taxing the Family*, as late as 1948 a family with four children making the median income of $3187 was completely exempted from taxes by the $600 deduction for dependents. Inflation has since devoured these benefits. From 1960 to 1984, single people faced an essentially flat tax rate, while couples with two children saw their taxes rise 43 percent and couples with four children a remarkable 223 percent.

The poor have thus become caught in a pincer movement. Regulation of the labor market, which assured the prosperity of the middle class, has limited the ability of the poor to work their way out of poverty. Meanwhile, AFDC—that great historical accident—has offered poor *women* an alternative occupation: single motherhood. As Mikhail Bernstam and Peter Swan of the Hoover Institution recently put it, the government has become "the marriage partner of last resort"—maybe even of first resort, since almost 90 percent of black teenage mothers no longer marry.

It is a well-established principle in biology that when monogamy breaks down, the sexual competition between males becomes far more violent. Because every male is no longer assured a reasonable chance of *finding* a mate (the implicit social contract of monogamy), the battle for access to women becomes much more intense. Thus, black communities have essentially become a free-for-all where men compete murderously among themselves for the symbols of power (drugs, money, whatever), while women and children remain ensconced in single-parent homes, living off the government. Men become increasingly more attuned to violence, women increasingly more comfortable with welfare; and the chances that ordinary human institutions like marriage and the family can be re-established become increasingly remote.

The reasons for the collapse of black culture, then, are fairly clear. The big question is, does anybody really care to do anything about it?

The initiative is certainly not going to come from the middle class. Unions, licensed carpenters and electricians, taxi-medallion owners, civil-service employees—none of these are going to give up their government-sponsored monopolies. There are too many people benefiting from the regulated labor market for it to be seriously challenged by either political party.

Nor is any leadership likely to come from the black community. The Reagan Administration found this out when it recently proposed repealing Davis-Bacon and met a deafening silence from black politicians. As Walter Williams points out, there is a tacit understanding between the *leadership* of blacks and labor that blacks will not challenge union regulations if unions continue to support welfare spending.

And so the Democrats continue to try to gather everyone under one tent. When the system reaches its natural limits, they shout, "Full employment!" and watch the inflationary fires burn. Republicans, for their part, preach supply-side economics—which has dramatically reduced unemployment, but still seems incapable of picking up the most unemployable. When this system reaches its limits, Republicans ask churches to make up the difference, or pretend the problems don't exist.

As a compromise, both parties seem to have settled on something called "workfare." Several states, including Michael Dukakis's Massachusetts, claim to have gotten thousands of people off the dole by requiring that recipients go through job-training programs, with some mild threats of losing their benefits if they don't eventually find work. A similar program is now

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wending its way through Congress under the aegis of Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

What most welfare reformers don't want to discuss, however—and what many may not even realize—is that workfare will do nothing to put the black family back together. The main problem with single mothers, after all, is not that they don't *work*, but that they don't *get married.* By marrying, they would encourage men to work and at the same time start raising children who are not virtually programmed for juvenile delinquency. Yet the carefully muted premise of workfare is just the opposite. Under the tutelage of the government, black women will be helped to become as financially independent as possible of black men.

This is no accident. The dirty little secret among welfare reformers right now is that they have essentially given up on black men. Ever since the Williamsburg, Virginia Conference on Poverty and Policy in 1984, sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services, a consensus has emerged among poverty specialists that "women can be helped, but men can't."

The turning point was the $82 million Manpower Development Research Corporation (MDRC), whose five-year, 21-city effort was chronicled by Ken Auletta in *The Underclass.* Sponsored largely by the Ford Foundation, MDRC gave intense job and personality training to 11,000 underclass recruits drawn from three principally male groups—drug addicts, ex-convicts, and recent high school drop-outs—plus welfare mothers. After more than a year of intensive training and sheltered employment, only one group showed any real long-term improvement—welfare mothers. None of the male groups responded to the incentives. Other studies have since produced similar findings.

Thus, although nobody wants to admit it, the new "workfare" system is essentially going to look like this:

(1) Female teenagers will qualify for the program by getting pregnant. This will make them eligible for job-training and other educational benefits.

(2) Under the direction of the state, they will undergo intensive educational efforts to teach them to function fairly independently.

(3) If all goes well, they will be turned back to society within a few years—as capable as possible of raising their children without the help of men.

Thus, if workfare is *successful*, the single-parent, female-headed household will become institutionalized even beyond the incentives of AFDC. Any question of whether poor black men can break back into this family structure is essentially moot. The system has given up on them and is concentrating on those who *may* still make it: black women.

Is there any alternative to this Rube-Goldberg system that virtually begs women to become pregnant and then uses this failure as an opportunity to teach them ersatz independence? I propose there is.

The first thing we must do is take a holistic approach—look at the entire life cycle of a member of the underclass and ask ourselves where the intervention of the state can be expected to do the most good. After all, the entire present system has been improvised out of fifty years of backing and filling—patching up a system that was wrongly conceived in the first place.

In 1984, Leon Dash, a veteran *Washington Post* investigator, spent a year living in a welfare-dependent housing project that has the highest rate of illegitimacy in Washington, fully one out of four children being born to unwed teenagers. Before moving in, Dash said, he had been given several interpretations of teenage pregnancies. Conservatives told him girls had babies just to collect welfare grants. Liberals said teenage births came because girls were ignorant of birth-control or were leading dreary lives and wanted someone to love. "Neither prediction turned out to be true," Dash noted.

Instead, he found a world where, for boys and girls alike, having a child has become a "rite of passage." Young people simply cannot imagine an adult life beyond age 19 or so. They are grown-ups at 12, want children as quickly as possible (in order to prove their manor womanhood), and place enormous peer pressure on any "goody two-shoes" who is not sexually active or pregnant by age 15.

Black teenagers in these circumstances have absolutely no sense of the future. The boys expect to be strung out or dead by 25, the girls to be grandmothers by 35. The whole concept of adolescence as a *preparation* for life, rather than life itself, has been lost. If a 15-year-old does not have a baby with her current boyfriend *right now*, there will never be another chance for her. The idea of postponing any kind of gratification in order to facilitate some greater future goal has become completely lost.

What can the larger society offer in such a situation? Certainly, some kind of financial assistance is essential. But how can such assistance encourage positive goals rather than reward failure?

I suggest that we should revive—metaphorically, at least—what was perhaps America's most successful effort to even the scales between rich and poor: the Homestead program. After 1862, the government made land grants available out of the public lands. The program continued until 1916. Altogether, 80 million acres were granted to 500,000 claimants. Certainly, not all deserving people got land; probably a lot of undeserving people got what they shouldn't have. But the program worked. The "safety valve" of the Homestead program is often credited with preventing the development of a permanently impoverished underclass in the nineteenth century.

The principle of the Homestead program could be made the basis of a policy that would give impoverished youth the "hand up" in their effort to become productive members of society.

Such vast expanses of public land, of course, are no longer available. But the *principle* of the Homestead program could be made the basis of a policy that would give impoverished youth the "hand up" in their effort to become productive members of society. Beginning in some specific year—1990, for instance—every young person who has lived below the poverty line for three years should be given a $5000 cash grant when they reach age 21. The grant would replace AFDC. Anyone on AFDC in 1990 could remain on the rolls so long as they were eligible—or they could "cash in" their benefits for a similar one-time $5,000 grant. But no new cases would be opened. AFDC as we now know it would thus be phased out over the next generation and return to being a program *only* for widows and orphans.

What would such a "New Homestead Program" cost? It's easy to calculate. There are 35 million people currently living below the poverty line. Of those, about one in twenty-two—1.5 million—turn 21 each year. The annual cost would thus be $7.5 billion—half of what AFDC costs today. Another option could be to allow individuals to "bank" their grants and receive $10,000 each at age 25, when they could put it to even better use. A husband and wife, each with a $10,000 grant, could make a down payment on half the homes sold in this country.

The first principle of such a system, of course, would be to cut the link between welfare benefits and fertility. The government simply must stop subsidizing the failure of family formation. Even more important, however, the "New Homestead Program" would give poor teenagers a reasonable chance of getting a start at the age when they *should* be taking their first steps toward independence. A homestead grant would give them something to look forward to in life—and also distribute benefits more equitably between the sexes.

Some reformers would probably want to attach all kinds of conditions to the grant—you must graduate from high school, you must have a job, you cannot have illegitimate children. But I believe there must be some assumption of responsibility. If people blow the whole $5000 on drugs or clothes, that's their problem. But afterwards they must realize that, as able-bodied citizens, they're on their own. No more marrying the government, no more chronic dependency, no more living off state subsidies for anti-social, anti-familial behavior.

The whole point would be to *give teenagers something to look forward to,* an organizing principle around which to control their present behavior. When philanthropist Eugene Lang promised a class of Harlem sixth-graders seven years ago that he would pay for their college education if they finished high school, nearly all of them did just that. That's the kind of principle we should be pursuing.

Paul Weyrich, of the Free Congress Foundation, has proposed a pact between conservatives and minority leaders over welfare reform. He suggests that conservatives promise to support any program, *no matter what it costs*, as long as it takes the negative incentives out of welfare and promises to set low-income blacks and others on a permanent path to family stability and independent functioning.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember is that the old verities do work. Family, community, initiative, self-reliance—the traditional qualities that made America—have not been defeated by the twentieth century. They have merely been overshadowed for a while by the collectivist fantasies that have mesmerized the intelligentsia—and, to some extent, the public as well.

There is no reason that the poor should be held hostage to the ill-conceived utopias or the misguided charity of baleful bureaucrats. The poor are the people who most need to be liberated from the dead hand of government. It is time we all put our heads together to try to find a solution. □

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PLANT CLOSINGS AND THE REPUBLICANS

by Irwin M. Stelzer

Is Ronald Reagan really intent on making Michael Dukakis the next President of the United States? His vigorous opposition to legislation requiring employers to provide advance notice of plant closings, or of "mass layoffs," suggests that the answer is "yes." After all, polls show that over 70 percent of Americans favor such notice. And such Republican operatives as Douglas Bailey are warning the President that "the issue goes beyond economics to emotions."

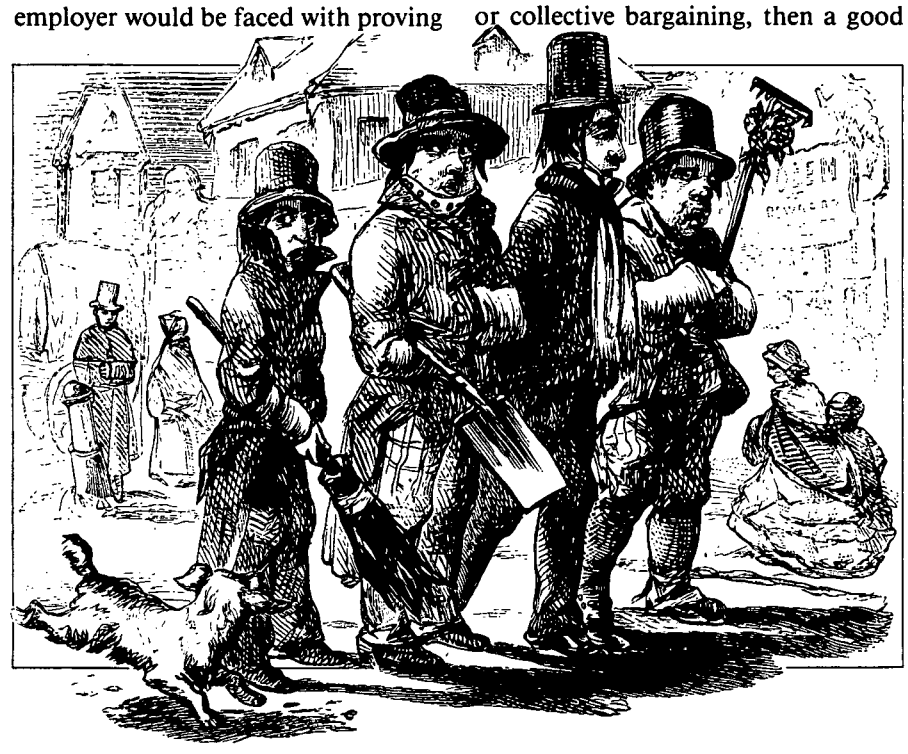
And so it does. But before deciding whether the President is right to buck the popular tide, we have to answer two often-ignored questions. Just what is in these advance notice bills that arouses such emotions on both sides? And do workers need legislation protecting against sudden dismissals? Only when we know the answer to those questions can we intelligently decide whether the President is sacrificing George Bush's election chances on the altar of some outdated ideology—"It's going to be a tough sell from a campaign point of view," says one of the Vice President's aides—or whether he is quite properly resisting some ill-conceived tampering with the labor market.

The recently vetoed advance-notice legislation is sufficiently representative of the genre to provide a basis for analysis. It required companies with at least 100 workers to give sixty days' advance notice of a plant closing that would affect fifty or more workers. It also required similar notice of "mass layoffs," defined as layoffs affecting 33 percent of the work force, or 500 workers, whichever is less. Such notice must be given both to affected workers and to their communities.

Just as "plant closing" grew to include layoffs in plants not being closed, so other words in legislation such as this take on meanings that would probably surprise even some supporters of the advance notice principle. An "employment loss," for example, is deemed to have occurred not only when a worker finds the plant gates padlocked: such a loss includes a 50 percent reduction in working hours over six consecutive months.

Failure to provide notice triggers stiff penalties. The community can sue for damages of $500 per day. Employees who do not receive "timely notice" can sue for back pay and fringes, *even if* they receive severance pay pursuant to their employment agreements, and even if they have found jobs elsewhere. In short, a laid-off employee who did not receive adequate notice, but did get severance pay and has found a new job, is eligible for back pay. So much for the claim that advance notice is merely intended to make victims of plant closings whole.

There are, of course, the usual exceptions. If an employer can prove that the layoffs weren't "reasonably foreseeable," he is exempt. So, too, if he can show that giving notice would have kept him from obtaining capital "which, if obtained, would have enabled the employer to avoid or postpone indefinitely the shutdown." The problem with these exemptions is that they are of little practical value. The employer would be faced with proving his case in some local court, after having laid off hundreds of workers or closed a plant in that jurisdiction. Add to that the fact that every businessman's files contain memoranda about problems—cancelled orders, rising costs, foreign competition—that others will argue should have led him to "foresee" the closing.



So the legislation is clearly one-sided. But does that mean it isn't needed? The answer depends in part on how one views the employer-employee relationship. If one believes that workers are entitled to market wages and benefits for each day's work performed, and that those wages reflect the various risks (including being laid off) associated with the specific employment, the employer owes the worker only the payment of those wages. The worker works, the employer pays for that work a sum which includes an unemployment risk premium. End of obligations.

If, on the other hand, one believes that the employment relationship goes beyond a straightforward money-for-work exchange, that *equity* requires employers to provide advance notice of layoffs beyond what the employees have been able to obtain in individual or collective bargaining, then a good case can be made for advance notification legislation, especially since such notice is now a rarity. Studies by the General Accounting Office show that relatively few of the firms laying off workers in recent years provided much notice: 32 percent provided none at all, another 34 percent provided one-to-fourteen days. The average of all surveyed firms was seven days.

The problem with basing legislation on notions of "equity," of course, is the extraordinary elasticity of that word in the hands of liberal politicians. Competition from Korean shoemakers is "unfair," as are employment-creating wages that contravene the *Fair* Labor Standards Act. It is "unfair" to deny (often wealthy) Social Security recipients their cost-of-living increases, and at the same time "unfair" to reduce the tax burdens of this same well-off group. So it is far better to rely on a comparison of roughly measurable costs and benefits than to use an elastic "equity" yardstick to appraise economic legislation.

The Reagan economic arguments against advance notice requirements are couched in terms of job growth and costs. Reagan's men argue that employment growth rates in countries without advance notice laws—the U.S., Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Korea—have averaged 3.2 percent since 1982, compared with only 1.6 percent in countries with such laws (Britain, Germany, Canada, Brazil, Mexico, and Singapore). Moreover, a study by Robert R. Nathan Associates puts the employers' cost at $1.8 billion per year, and adds that we would have had 460,000 fewer jobs in 1986 had an advance notice requirement been in effect during the five preceding years.

And there would be other costs if this bill became law. Not least would be the introduction of a European-style fear into the hearts of American employers: think twice about hiring someone it will prove costly to fire. Remember: agreements to provide severance pay do not relieve the employer of the necessity of giving advance notice of layoffs, nor of the obligation to pay

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back wages if notice is not given.

Is the President, then, correct in arguing that he is protecting jobs and the vaunted mobility of America's labor market by opposing this bill, whatever its effects on his poor Vice President's efforts to retain the blue-collar votes that elected Reagan? No—for two reasons.

The first is tactical. The advance notice provision was only one part of a seriously flawed 1000-page trade bill. Reagan could have based his major case against it on those provisions that transfer much of the President's power over trade negotiations to the U.S. trade representative. The Democrats would give that representative the power to decide which foreign trade practices should be investigated and to recommend to the President the retaliatory steps to be taken. The President would be required to take the recommended steps unless he can show that they would seriously harm the U.S. economy or national security.

The danger in this transfer of authority is that the trade representative is a creature of Congress—his selection requires Senate approval, and he is required to report to various congressional committees. As such, he would be subject to all of the parochial pressures brought to bear on individual congressmen by industries located in their districts. These would be transmitted to the trade representative, who doesn't have the President's burden of balancing them against wider U.S. interests. In short, a powerful representative of protection-seeking special interests would be created.

The second reason the President is wrong in opposing some sort of advance notice legislation is that the economic arguments he is using are seriously flawed. The claim that an advance notice requirement would stifle employment growth in America is unsupported by the international comparisons offered by the Reaganites. For one thing, many factors other than the presence or absence of such a requirement affect employment levels: to attribute America's spectacular relative success in creating jobs to an absence of severance notice is, for example, to ignore the impact of Reagan's regulatory and tax reforms. For another thing, Japan has long required warnings of layoffs, with no noticeable negative effect on its ability to maintain full employment.

The cost estimate used by Reagan's business partisans is also baseless. The Nathan report's figure of $1.8 billion annually results solely from the unsubstantiated assumption that 10 percent of the difference between U.S. employment growth and that of slower growing economies is due to the absence of advance notice bills. No evidence for this figure is offered, prompting the General Accounting Office to point out that the Nathan results are "not supported by the information and analyses presented."

And the President is ignoring possible benefits from advance notice. Employer organizations are virtually unanimous in pointing out that laid-off workers often have no skills in job hunting, and need time to organize relocation efforts (a key factor when plants close, drying up opportunities in an entire community). Measures to give workers advance notice of layoffs should reduce the time they spend unemployed and the burden on the public purse. They should also reduce support for demands to "protect" jobs in inefficient industries.

In short, the economic case against advance notice legislation has not been made. Nor has the Administration developed economically sensible alternatives—cost-effective measures to improve worker mobility. Without a powerful economic case, voters are left to weigh Reagan's free-market inclinations against a variety of equity arguments. Workers suddenly laid off have fixed financial obligations, such as mortgage payments; they often lose medical coverage; they need time to acquire new skills. Contrast this with the golden parachutes enjoyed by business opponents of advance notice for blue-collar workers, and the general conclusion will be that the Democrats care, while the Republicans are the Rhett Butlers of American politics: they frankly don't give a damn, at least for the ordinary working man. Little wonder that almost two-thirds of Americans believe that, if elected, Bush will favor his country-club friends.

That's why the mere fact of full employment won't be enough to persuade most workers to back Bush. The magnitude and rate of change in the business community—corporate restructurings, the relative growth of service industries, the internationalization of markets—contribute both to our prosperity and to the fear that it will not last. The level of apprehension about the future is too great to be reduced by the fact of current prosperity. Bush will have to shed some Reaganite baggage and take a clear-eyed look at advance notice and other labor market legislation appropriate to today's fast-moving economy. In the absence of some economically sound solution to the problem of increased insecurity, we're likely to have Dukakis's notion of "equity" imposed on employer-employee relations. Not a happy prospect. □

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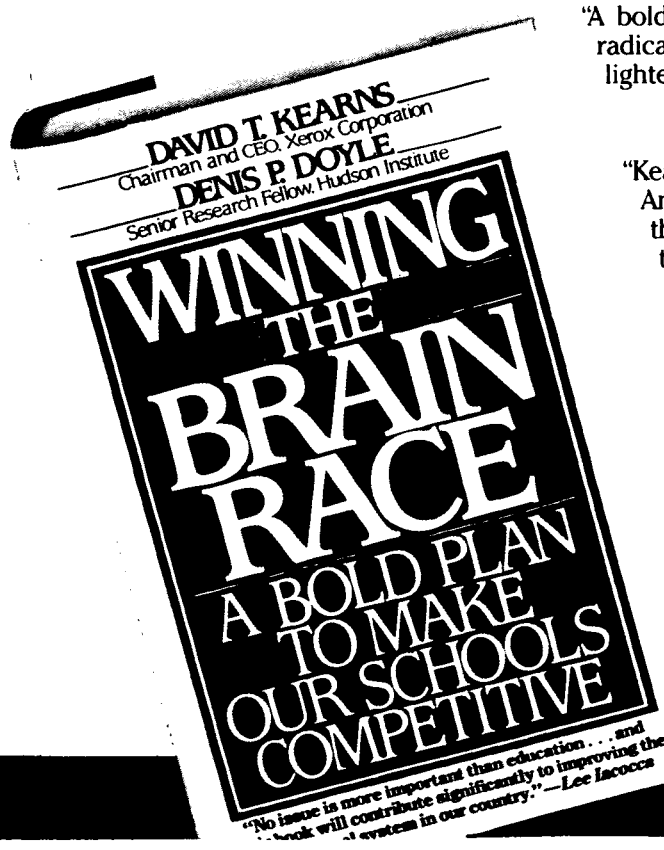
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CLUB LIB

by Geoffrey Wagner

In 1984 New York's mayor, Ed Koch, found himself facing an important primary. He had not previously been notorious for sympathy to the women's movement any more than to city retirees or minority landlords (while retaining for himself a rent-controlled apartment in Greenwich Village). But the feminist terror squads were abroad and growling around the men-only clubs, urged on by Carol Bellamy, Jacqueline Wexler, and Shirley Chisholm, who once claimed to have been shown the service entrance to the University Club, not an easy area to find since it is sub-street level. One New York woman complained of being turned away from the Union League Club by "two giant Nubians." (How did she know them as such?) Down in Washington, D.C., NOW was picketing the celebrated Cosmos Club, of which Justice Blackmun is a member.

As the primary approached, Hizzoner's conscience compelled him to pass Local Law 63, bravely forcing open the chauvinist portals of such clubs to women, and targeting, as disgraceful *exempla*, three in particular—University, Century, and Union League. The concern proved catching. New York's Local 63 was used as a prototype around the land. A similar unisex ordinance took effect in the District of Columbia at the turn of last year, while cities from Los Angeles to Buffalo got into the act, issuing local laws designed to break up male social and civic clubs. Politically there was nothing to lose.

Local 63 showed its hypocrisy in its selectivity. It exempted religious and women's organizations; for example, women-only clubs, like the Cosmopolitan and Colony, have not been bothered. By now these groups have their defenses ready, though to the consternation of New York's City Hall the Washington, D.C. ordinance was more rigorously interpreted and its all-female Sulgrave Club required to admit men.

Geoffrey Wagner, Emeritus Professor of English at CCNY, lives in retirement in Grenada.

Few have shown up for membership.[1] America being America, properly absurdist gestures have been made to point up the silliness of all this; last year one male applied for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution, while in Maryland two men sued over their exclusion from an all-female aerobics class (the three lost).

Meanwhile, capitulation to the unisex ordinances became widespread as clubs digested the vast expense of fighting tax-levy suits, the Houston Club and Union League of Chicago soon throwing in their all-male towels. The California Club capitulated but the Bohemian Clubs in that state have dragged their feet; after all, the Bohemian Club of San Francisco numbers several U.S. Presidents in its membership, including Ronald Reagan. (Moreover, it has a thirteen-year wait for election.) The city of Los Angeles slung a suit on its tiny Jonathan Club to open the last all-male part of itself (bar and grill) to women, and the club slung one right back, to invalidate the ordinance, which had been initiated by an infuriated councilwoman with tight shoes called Joy Picus. The club's counsel pointed out that it already admitted women, a fact of which the filing city attorney seemed unaware, and that the women did not want intrusion into the club's affairs any more than the male members did. Controller Rick Tuttle countered that the club continued "to openly degrade women" by disallowing them bar and grill service, though there had been no complaints; the exclusion, said Tuttle, represented "discrimination in its ugliest form."

[1]It works both ways: a year after New York's University Club opened its doors to women fewer than a dozen have come in.

Local 63 was a law against which logic was unlikely to win. It exempted any "distinctly private" establishment, defining such as under 400 members. Yet this yardstick has been used with scandalously contemptuous selectivity. The three targeted clubs in New York City—the University (4,400 members, plus 1,300 ladies with signing privileges), Century (1,900), and Union League (2,500)—are well above the benchmark, but so are the Racquet and Tennis, with 2,200, the Metropolitan Club, with 2,300, and the highly exclusive The Links, with 900. As Roger Starr put it in the *Public Interest* last fall, New York City "narrowed its main target to the clubs that the women's movement found offensive." The largest of these, the University Club, was the most hospitable to women, with its mixed-sex functions, unisex luncheons and dinners, ground-floor ladies' lounge and dining room; it was therefore the most vulnerable and aggressively harassed, though more recently, after University's vote to admit women, it was the Union League that was cited by the NYC Human Rights Commission for sex bias. Union League voted to stay all-male in April 1987, and is now in court under the New York State Club Association umbrella, which covers 125 clubs. (Last year the Supreme Court, to the open dismay of City Hall, agreed to review the constitutionality of Local 63.) Interestingly, the Polish-American Citizens Club of Boston, which said it would close if forced to admit women, has yet to be approached by the feminist hit squads.

The diligence with which the city went after the University Club was remarkable. The Mayor banned city employees from conducting business with the club and threatened to get the Licensing Board to withhold liquor and food licenses. The University Club, to which I have belonged for a quarter of a century, is a landmarked Stanford White building on the corner of Fifth Avenue and 54th Street in Manhattan. Its exterior is graceful, though not extraordinary; however, its interior has great character and reeks of Sargent. Indeed, one objection to the inclusion of women was that it might mean (illegal as well as unaesthetic) alteration to a handsome example of turn-of-the-century Americana: some of the finest Carrara marble in the city will be cut up to make way for women's johns.

Thus, because the club was just about the most publicly accommodating imaginable, it is slated to be a public accommodation. It regularly rented out rooms and space to non-member groups of whose composition

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it had no prior knowledge. At noon its main atrium was always filled with contented lady guests and wives of members, who could use most areas of the club except for those where men went about in the buff, such as the squash floor or in and around the basement pool. Having now opened up the club to both sexes, the new women should logically share nudity with their male colleagues; if they look like Andrea Dworkin or Betty Friedan there should be no problem (with male members). After all, there are feminist groups which decry any separate facilities for the sexes as unequal. (There has even been one movement to try to get women to urinate standing up.) University once had a ladies' dining room to which men might go only when accompanied by their wives. The room has now been decreed discriminatory and retitled a general eaterie, thus depriving women of self-protection.

Further idiocies abound. Members' wives used to be able to use all their areas without scrutiny from any admissions committee. Today such become "spouses," the male versions of which, unsupervised, may now enter all elements of the club at any time. The club then becomes a public facility. If you run a restaurant or bar in Washington or Gotham any transvestite can wander off the street and demand service (and, in Manhattan, demand that a menu be displayed on the door). So may the guy in metal-studded jeans who comes off the curb with his I LOVE NEW YORK T-shirt stained from his shortdog bottle of Gallo. Deny him a room and he will appeal to the nearest Commission on Human Rights.

So in this self-parodistic world, what do you do, with Local 63 on your back, to keep the cocaine artists out of your club? The clubs with strict university affiliations, like Yale, Harvard, Princeton, afford some protection, but Local 63 forces one to turn to money for privacy. The slobs can't get into Lutèce because they can't afford it. This is totally contrary to the spirit of the private club. One of the features of those I knew in my youth in England was to emphasize that you had to have something more than what was in your pocket. White's dues in the fifties were, I seem to recall, twenty-five guineas a year, those of Boodle's (the aristocracy) less. Turn a club into a pub and you transfer onto it all sorts of bunco infringements, for which that straggle of Chinatown at the wormy foot of the Apple, off Center Street, has courts in plenty a-waiting, not to mention more than 300 Assistant District Attorneys in Manhattan, yet more in Brooklyn.

But the ostensible reason why Koch dumped on University had nothing to do with its enviable purity of membership. Far from it. The membership is not elegant. It is even, at the edges, a trifle chintzy; for instance, it grants honorary membership to all college presidents, some of whom these days would not pass muster in the Lower Slobbovian Darts Club.

No, the weasel by which New York City contrived to put the three targeted clubs over the barrel was that exclusion of women meant denial of business opportunities. This was where power brokers gathered, the reasoning goes, and men didn't want women in power. But this argument cannot suffice. The Brook, untouched, is full of power brokers, was indeed once said to run the country. Further, at the University Club, as at the D.C. Metropolitan Club (briefcases and legal pads forbidden), no business could be conducted on the premises, both clubs having strict rules against the showing of commercial papers in all areas. As a matter of fact, University was preparing to compel the payment of dues and house charges with a signed rider that such would not be used against taxes. Local 63 clearly sees the club as an extension of the workplace, which it is not; but if the law treats that private club as business-oriented then the private club will become so.

There was clearly a large ingredient of spite motivating Local 63, and when the city of New York has you by the short hairs in such matters there is little you can do about it; the city could decide to tax the air above your club, let alone deny it food and beverage licenses. Surely, then, one may appeal to justice in such matters, if not reason. Although the Supreme Court enjoined unisexuality on the Jaycees in 1984 (Rotary succumbing a little later), in the Jaycees' case it is interesting to note that Justice Brennan flagged such intrusion into free associations as unconstitutional, an opinion with which liberals like William O. Douglas and Thurgood Marshall had earlier concurred. Such clubs, Douglas declared, formed a "zone of privacy which precludes the government from interfering." Despite this University caved in.

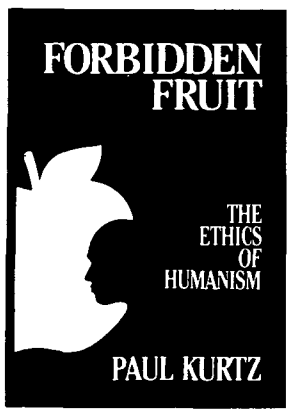
It did so at a meeting I attended on June 2, 1987. The discussion was dominated by members of a Committee of 1000, a well-organized pro-feminist body which reminded me that in *New York* magazine Jane Edmunds had likened the University Club to "an automobile convention"; for Cleveland Amory it called to mind "a rather crowded and not very exclusive hotel." The group included as signatories such names as Walter Wriston and David Rockefeller, whose brother Nelson had died in the saddle (riding bareback) right next door. Men so close to city governance as these could be counted on not to want any anti-women vote on their blotters, and such is what the Committee of 1000 simplified it to. Fear of the city so ruled the day that one exasperated old Judge rose to wonder why we took any notice of Tammany Hall at all, since in a year or so most of them would be in jail anyway. In an implacable suit and clammy face Theodore Kheel spoke loudest and most excitably. Could one expect the leading professional city mediator of union disputes to go on the record as anti-women? How this bundle of thrashed-out brains ever got into the club alongside the bat guano remains a mystery to me. All I have personally learnt from a lifetime of New York City service is that the higher a monkey climbs, the more you see of its backside. The Committee of 1000 won, two to one.

And won what? They won the right to give women access to our alleged male business discussions. Which said that we had business discussions. Which said that the club was a business institution and members could use their dues as business deductions. Which was not merely contrary to the spirit of clubdom but to that of the Internal Revenue Service.

It seems to me that the whole ball of wax was largely due to the clubs growing too large. Stephen Birmingham's *America's Secret Aristocracy* shows that, when allowed to be, Americans have been as elitist as any nationals in forming private clubs. The object is privacy. The smaller the club, therefore, the better. As an undergraduate at Oxford I was made a member of the select Christ Church Twenty Club with a membership limited to twenty. The U.S. Zodiac Club seems to be (numerically) more exclusive still, with only twelve members, no address, and (*horresco referens*) no telephone number. Sherlock Holmes's Diogenes Club forbade all speech in public rooms: you conversed, if at all, by signs. Today, ironically enough, I find myself enjoying the most privacy among West Indians, perhaps the last Englishmen around, in the St. George's Club, Grenada, celebrating its centenary this year with eighteen members.

I envisage a day when you can pick up an application for the Brook at the door and pay within by credit card. The Kochs of the world will make male clubs into so many bowling alley parking lots with chewing gum and CCs (Collapsible Containers or condoms) on sale at the front desk, alongside copies of newcomers' constitutional rights which their lawyers are too busy defending to read. The Supreme Court may have come out on the side of the clubs by the time you read this, but to what purpose? These places have stepped over the threshold by now and can't undo the depredations. So I see myself waiting in the Stanford White atrium for my guest. Lo and behold, it's Hizzoner. As he fumbles with his greasy necktie he asks, "What's the dress?" And this time I'll be able to answer, "You can wear one if you want to." □

Forbidden Fruit
The Ethics of Humanism
by Paul Kurtz



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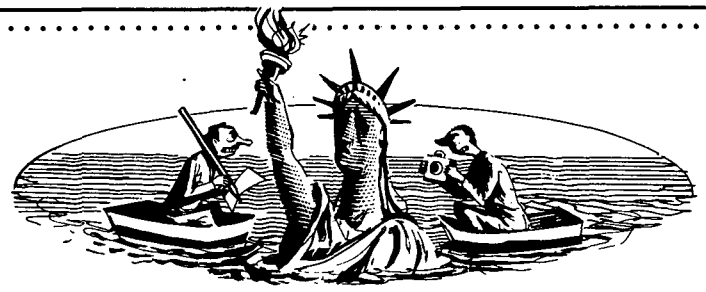

WEASEL WORDS AND DEEDS

by Michael Ledeen

When does a journalist take responsibility for what he writes, and when does he "fudge" it by wrapping various disclaimers around it? I don't know if this is a metaphysical question, or a political one (there is, of course, a substantial overlap), but it is prompted by two peculiar efforts at fudgemanship, and one fairly blatant bit of disinformation.

First, the fudge. Exhibit A comes from John Goshko of the *Washington Post*, in an article sucked from the thumb of the Department of State about "Polish Unrest and U.S. Soviet-Bloc Policy." The thrust of the article is that the State Department—identified in the august person of Deputy Secretary John Whitehead—is afraid that things are heating up in the satellites, and that might get Gorbachev upset. Hence, the United States shouldn't do anything vis-à-vis Eastern Europe that would threaten "the supremacy of Communism in the region." The phrase is, of course, highly misleading, since Communism is hardly supreme in the region; it's the Red Army that dominates. But I digress. Later on, Goshko notes that Romania is about to lose its status as a Most Favored Nation, because "President Nicolae Ceausescu's regime is unwilling to change what the United States regards as systematic repression of religious and political dissidents and restrictions on emigration."

That little phrase, "what the United States regards," is what attracted my attention. What is it doing there? Is there anyone around who doubts that Romania is one of the most repressive dictatorships in the world? Certainly not. But the effect of Goshko's weasel words is to suggest that this view of Romania is somehow the unique property of the American government. It's done quietly, gently introduced into one of the last paragraphs of the story, but good editors should have caught it and removed it.

Exhibit B comes from a front-page story in the *Wall Street Journal* on May 16, a profile of Nicaragua's Interior Minister Tomas Borge, written by Michael Allen. It's a friendly picture ("as he and revolution have matured, he says, he has come to realize the need for the forms of democracy . . . ") of a man who has well earned his reputation as the Sandinistas' leading Marxist. When Allen describes the nature of the Sandinista regime, he resorts to one of those odd phrases that prompt the current sermon:

> With the advent of the Sandinista coalition came promises of a democratic government, not a Cuban-style revolutionary regime. But the promises, critics say, were quickly broken. What resulted was a government led by the few but dressed in the garb of Western democracy, with an elected president and national assembly.

The last sentence is highly misleading, since the Sandinistas certainly did not pretend they were Western democrats. Indeed, they informed their own followers—in a printed document later made public by the U.S. State Department—that they had no intention of submitting their regime to the whims of the Nicaraguan electorate, and they infuriated Castro by speaking openly of their desire to install a Communist system and help spread Communist revolution throughout the region. But I digress again, for what is at issue here is that peculiar "critics say" in the second sentence. There may be a few apologists for the Sandinistas who are willing to say they believe the Nicaraguan government is "democratic," but you can probably count them on the fingers of one mutilated hand. "Critics say" is another one of those weasely expressions designed to weaken the impact of the truth: the Nicaraguan regime is anti-democratic.

Third, a straightforward bit of disinformation: in *Newsweek*'s May 16 issue, there's a short piece entitled "A Failure of Intelligence," written by John Barry. It deals with the competition in tank/anti-tank technology between us and the Soviets, and contains an account of our efforts to find out what the Soviets were up to. The relevant paragraph reads:

> U.S. intelligence has a rule that satellite photos must be confirmed by "humint"—human intelligence. For tanks, that means the 14-man U.S. Military Liaison Mission in East Germany. Intense pressure has been put on this team to prove or disprove the hints of Soviet advances. One team member, Maj. Arthur Nicholson, Jr., actually manages to climb inside a T-80 and take photos. . . . Then, while breaking into a Soviet tank garage, Nicholson is shot by a Russian sentry and bleeds to death. The limits of "humint" become clearer.

A nasty piece of work by Mr. Barry. First, the "rule" is at a minimum overstated, and at worst highly misleading, for there are many cases in which we accept evidence that has not been confirmed by human sources (there are lots of ways to confirm hypotheses, of which human inspection is only one and far from the most reliable). Second, the vicious slander on Nicholson, who was not breaking into anything, but simply looking through a window. Moreover, he was shot while returning to his vehicle. Americans trying to help him were physically restrained, and he was left isolated until he was dead. Finally, the gratuitous snide remark at the end, in essence saying, "that ought to teach the Americans a thing or two."

Ethiopia

There has been some excellent comment on and coverage of the murderous policies of the Ethiopian regime. The *Miami Herald* wrote an exceptionally good editorial on May 2, following a fine story by Sheila Rule in the *New York Times* on April 30. Rule wrote that "the fate of as many as two million hungry people depends largely

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Michael Ledeen is senior fellow in international affairs at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C.

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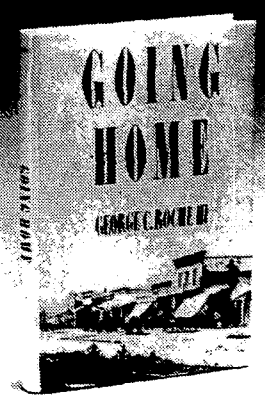

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on how much military support Moscow is willing to commit to this country," and the *Herald* upped the ante: "If Moscow fails to act, from five million to seven million people could die." This is because the Mengistu regime, supported by the Kremlin, is using famine as a weapon in its war against the Eritrean and Tigrean rebellion. Finally, a thoughtful op-ed piece by Tom Killion in the *Los Angeles Times* on May Day. Killion worked for fourteen months in a refugee camp in Sudan where Eritreans had fled, and tells us that "I never met an Eritrean who said he had come there because of famine"—all cited "lack of security" or other war-related problems.

In other words, the famine is produced by the regime, as all three accounts make clear. And this central fact, now fully acknowledged, is precisely what was missing a couple of years ago when the politically hip representatives of the rock music (excuse the oxymoron) industry were running around the Western world inducing mass guilt, and dunning our children for money to feed the starving Africans. We did not hear cries of "death to Mengistu" in those years (indeed, the passions of the young were stirred up to condemn the apartheid regime in South Africa, a place where, for all its undoubted evils, there is no famine), and we are not likely to hear any agonized reappraisals from the noisemakers now.

Toshiba Redux

You may recall that last year's big story was the scandalous behavior of Toshiba, which illegally sold the Soviet Union equipment that made it possible for the Soviets to make very quiet submarine propellers. The United States Congress caught up with the story, went on a rampage, and inflicted penalties on the Japanese. The Pentagon now buys nothing from Toshiba, and many of us have joined in a voluntary boycott of the treacherous company.

Now there is a followup, featuring a French firm called Forest Line. The details are coming out, but already enough is known to be able to say that it is much worse than Toshiba, and involves similar technology. This French company, with the assistance of a top general now in prison for espionage (having provided the Soviets with sensitive information about French nuclear programs, including the latest nuclear submarine), sold propeller-manufacturing technology to the Kremlin that is even more sensitive than the stuff that came from Toshiba.

The French are notoriously cynical about such matters (indeed, all matters), but they have taken very stern action in this case. But our press, perhaps exhausted by the Toshiba matter, has not done much with it. Yet it is only a matter of time before this, like Toshiba, becomes one of the year's truly big stories. And that is because the ability of the Soviet Union to obtain advanced technology is perhaps the most important issue facing the Western world today. Arms control is a sideshow. This is center ring.

Media Accountability, II

Last month I suggested that it is necessary to create some sort of body that can help mediate the conflict between the media and the government on questions regarding the publication of secret information. That has become more urgent because of the Supreme Court decision that leaking secret information to the media can constitute "espionage." Media spokesmen denounced the decision, claiming it threatened their First Amendment rights (and the likelihood of obtaining future leaks).

This issue is not going to go away, even though most of us wish it would. If the media and the government do not find some way to deal with it, it is only a matter of time before somebody publishes something so offensive and so damaging to national security that Congress gets into the act. And that will produce the worst of all possible worlds: legislation designed to prevent the last event, leaving everyone in a state of near-total uncertainty, lots of court cases, millions of dollars going into the pockets of the usual lawyers, years of court time that should be devoted to other matters, and the rest of the dreary scenario.

Is there no one in the industry who recognizes that it is time for some form of institutionalized accountability, at least in the field of national security? The requirements seem to me to be the following:

- a mechanism for at least trying to ascertain if a given story is damaging;
- the ability to hear from lawyers, government reps, and journalists about the propriety of publishing (or broadcasting) a given story;
- the ability to punish those who violate reasonable guidelines.

We already have laws on the books (you can't name American intelligence officials, you can't reveal information about "signals intelligence," you can't "disclose information damaging to American military security to unauthorized persons"), but we don't have clear guidelines for the media in these areas.

The clock is ticking. Perhaps Marvin Kalb, up at Harvard, is the right person to devote a few months to discussing this problem and making some dispassionate recommendations to his former brethren. Or do you prefer Joe Biden? ☐

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THE GREAT SINGAPORE SALOON SERIES

RAFFLES

by William McGurn

"Feed at Raffles, where the food is excellent" was the way Rudyard Kipling put it back in 1888. Well, sort of. What Kipling in fact wrote was "Providence conducted me . . . to a place called Raffles Hotel, where the food is excellent as the rooms are bad. Let the traveller take note. Feed at Raffles and sleep at the Hôtel de l'Europe," which an enterprising manager edited down into the aforementioned endorsement. A century later Kipling's advice still holds, and the wise traveler takes dinner and drink at Raffles but retires to the nearby Oriental, Mandarin, or Hilton for a good night's sleep.

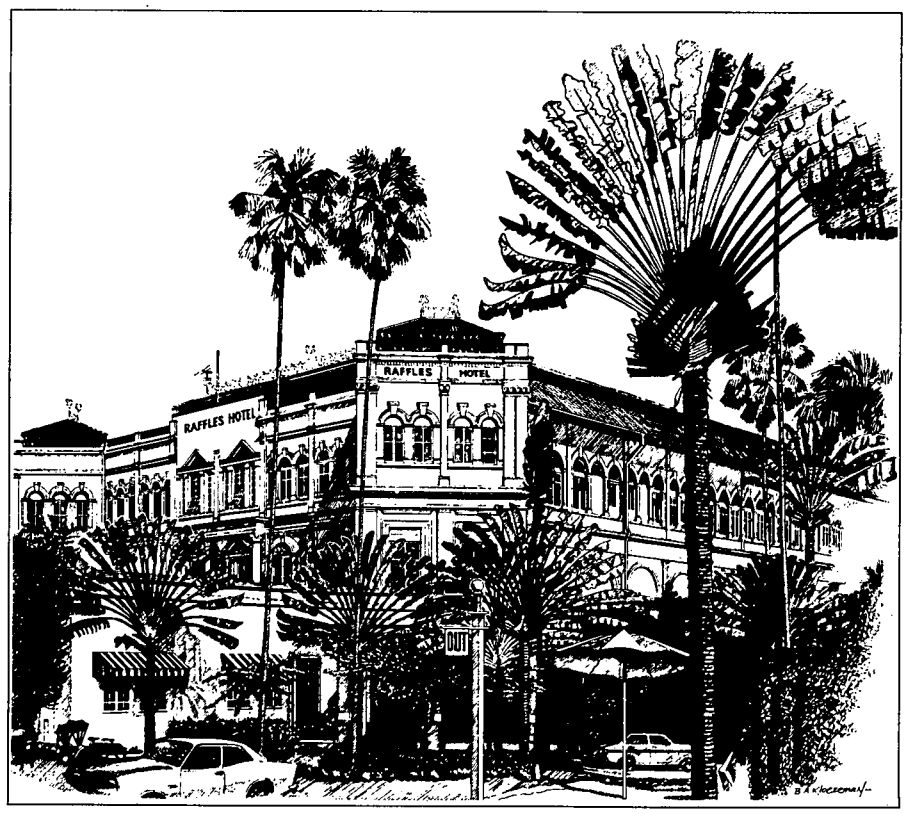
Like most former British colonies, Singapore owes whatever measure of charm it retains today to the ambitions and especially the pretensions of the Empire. Unlike most, Singapore's colonial charm is threatened not by decolonial Third World rot and neglect but by the city-state's transformation from a foul Southeast Asian backwater to a world trading power whose citizens enjoy a per-capita income that with Hong Kong is second only to Japan's. In contrast to freewheeling sister Hong Kong, however, Singapore has developed into a sort of Oriental Zurich, where even the leaves pause before dropping down on Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's pristine sidewalks. Here Indiana Jones would be a merchant banker.

Named for the man who established Singapore as a free port for the British East India Trading Co. back in 1819, Sir Thomas Stamford Bingley Raffles, the hotel is the most prominent survivor of the bygone days, when men were men and, according to the British, the Asians weren't. Today its peeling white facades and antiquated neo-renaissance style make the Raffles very much the aging dowager among Singapore's fleet of five-star skyscrapers with their rooftop pools and designer atriums. Its fame springs from a variety of sources, not least that it was once home to Somerset Maugham and two or three other ill-tempered writers, but serious bacchanals revere it for The Long Bar. For here in 1915 barman Ngiam Tong Boon created "the hit of the century": the Singapore Gin Sling.

The Long Bar is still here, an aptly named room about 30 x 50 feet with studiously faulty overhead fans, *de rigueur* cane chairs and tables, and one open-air wall that faces Beach Street. And, of course, a sea of pink gin slings made from Mr. Ngiam's celebrated formula:

½ jigger fresh Lemon/Lime juice
¼ jigger Grenadine Syrup
3 jiggers Pineapple Juice
1 drop Angostura Bitters
1 dash Benedictine Dom
1 dash Cointreau
½ jigger Peter Herring
1½ jiggers Gin

Mix gently in a cocktail shaker, strain into a tumbler, and then garnish with a slice of pineapple and a cherry.



Raffles itself was already something of a monument by the time the Singapore Sling was invented. It was founded in 1886 when the Armenian Sarkes brothers took over a beachfront mansion belonging to Capt. George Julius Dare and began renovations that culminated a year later in the opening of a twenty-room hotel, later expanded to 100 rooms and since remodeled several times. These were the days before fans, and guests were kept cool by *punkah wallahs*, Indian staff who operated sheets of cloth suspended from the ceiling to create a breeze, moving the sheets by means of a string attached to the big toe. Technology, alas, has robbed these people of their livelihoods, and today visitors who've had enough of the tropical discomfort of The Long Bar can repair to the air-conditioned "Writer's Bar" just across the lobby to have their sweat halted and frozen.

In fairness it ought to be pointed out that a good part of Raffles' mystique is simply that it has outlasted the competition, particularly the Hôtel de l'Europe, whose grounds were taken by the government in the 1930s. The other half is unabashed self-promotion, whereby minor incidents are transformed into major legends. Folklore has it, for example, that Malaysia's "last tiger" was bagged in the billiard room in 1902; in truth the unfortunate was a tired escapee from the circus who crawled under the hotel, where he was then rather unsportingly dispatched by a bullet from Singapore's crack shot.

More gruesome stories are associated with the brutal Japanese Occupation during the Second World War, when Raffles was reserved as home to senior Japanese officers. The staff suffered countless indignities, and were forced to adopt Japanese dress and language. Unlike their British overlords, however, who were caught out when the Japanese came by land rather than sea, the Raffles staff managed to bury the silver roast beef trolley in the Palm Court, where it remained until after the war. When the direction of the war became clear in 1945, moreover, one Japanese officer committed *hara-kiri* in his room but thoughtfully left a note exonerating the staff. More happily, when the liberation did come a number of Allied POWs enjoyed their first bath in Raffles after their release from the colony's notorious internment camps.

The most famous associations, however, have to do with the movie stars, kings, and writers who have passed nights under the roof. In addition to Kipling, Joseph Conrad is said to have stayed here during his three trips to Singapore between 1883 and 1887, though the evidence is thin. Herman Hesse stayed for a fortnight in 1911, describing it as a "large and noisy hotel," and Noël Coward checked in for a month in 1929. Like others before him he was by no means enchanted: "During that holiday I think my spirits reached their lowest ebb on the first evening I spent in Singapore. I sat on the verandah of the hotel, sipping a gin-sling and staring at the muddy sea."

Elizabeth Taylor must have wished she'd stayed on the verandah when a gown she'd ordered split at the seams during a dinner here in her honor; this

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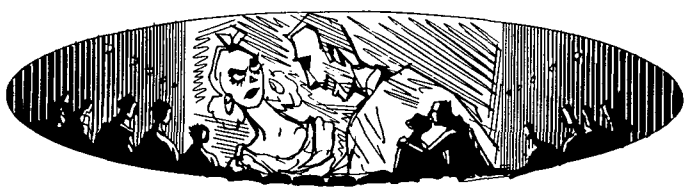
resulted in a public screaming match, with Liz accusing designer Doris Geddes of shoddy workmanship and Doris accusing the full-figured star of being too big for her britches, or words to that effect.

The most prominent of the literati, of course, was Somerset Maugham, whose favorite drink was not the Singapore Sling but the gin-and-vermouth-based Million Dollar Cocktail immortalized in his story "The Letter." Maugham's relationship with the Raffles was no one-night stand, and the histories are at pains to note that he did his writing in the morning, clad only in his shorts, at a table set up for him in the Palm Court. Evidently, too, he was not all that popular among the locals, who tended to cut up nasty at finding their private affairs and indiscretions turn up in Maugham's stories and novels. Ho We How, Maugham's room boy, now a barcaptain, was once asked by the great man whether he'd read any of his stuff, to which Mr. Ho replied that he didn't know how to read. Although Mr. Ho has since mastered the written word, he continues to display consummate good taste by declining still to read any Maugham work.

Decolonization continues to spread its ravages, and the Raffles has not been spared. Although some unmentionable practices have been corrected—the hotel, ahem, did not allow Asians or Eurasians in until the 1930s—one does not have to be an unabashed admirer of Lord Palmerston to regret the passing of white duck and chiffon for cut-offs and T-shirts. In the early days of independence from Britain the People's Action Party was so ferociously nationalist that the Elizabethan Grill was renamed the Epicurean Grill. But after a letter of complaint in the *Times*, and a boycott by local British businessmen, the Queen was restored and the government now appears bent on cashing in on the colonial past rather than eradicating it, particularly to attract the most nostalgic of tourists, the Americans. Indeed, one of the occupational hazards of those traversing the world's saloons in search of Authenticity is the unseemly number of one's fellow countrymen with the same idea. Problem of democracy, you see. This in turn leads to an awkward find: as in the Hofbrauhaus, everyone in the Long Bar turns out to be from Long Island.

But lamenting the fall of an era whose curtain had dropped long before one's birth is a healthy part of the attraction. Nor is it without its history lesson. Sitting in the Long Bar, even with Frank Sinatra's "Chicago, My Kind of Town" blaring over the loudspeakers, it's nonetheless impossible not to come away with a grudging acknowledgment for the superiority of the British colonials, men who left their homes to slog over impassable mountains, clear forests, drain swamps, establish cities, put down local tribesmen, and raise Her Majesty's flag over a quarter of the globe, all so that at the end of the day in the midst of barely tolerable living conditions they could enjoy that one last tipple. Cheers. □

THE TALKIES



COMMUNISTS AND KITSCH

by Bruce Bawer

If I've taken this long to get around to seeing *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, which came out last winter and has been playing two blocks from my home for weeks, it's because every time I passed the theater the notion of sitting through a 172-minute movie based on a European novel of ideas filled me with despair. Nor did it seem promising that the novel, written by the distinguished Czech émigré author Milan Kundera and published in 1984, was born of a philosophy that implies, among other things, a contempt for movies. For above all, Kundera despises kitsch, a term which (in his recent collection of essays, *The Art of the Novel*[1]) he defines broadly: "Kitsch is the translation of received ideas into the language of beauty and feeling. It moves us to tears of compassion for ourselves, for the banality of what we think and feel." In Kundera's lexicon, kitsch embraces all social and cultural phenomena—sentimental pop songs, clichéd TV news reports, and, yes, Hollywood movies—which are designed to please the crowd. The concept of kitsch figures crucially in the novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*.

Indeed, though the ordinary reader might consider Kundera's novels to be powerful indictments of Communism, to Kundera this sort of interpretation is itself only a sign of the ubiquity of the kitsch mentality. He plainly identifies with his character Sabina when she cries, "My enemy is kitsch, not Communism!" Kundera interprets the entire global situation in terms of kitsch. "The model of Communist kitsch is the ceremony called May Day," he writes, describing the gulag as "a septic tank used by totalitarian kitsch to dispose of its refuse." Then there's "American kitsch," a sensibility which Kundera sees reflected in catch phrases like "powerful indictment of Communism"; in his eyes, even to speak of the evils of Communism—to which his work testifies powerfully—is to indulge in American kitsch. Although Kundera (who has lived in Paris since 1975) clearly appreciates the value of living in the Free World, he seems compelled, for some reason, to play affirmative-action games when making moral comparisons between West and East, to find something—even if it's only the tackiness of New York buildings, the banality of the American media, or the schlockiness of Hollywood films—to stack up alongside Communism's legacy of crimes against humanity. (Pardon my American kitsch.)

To make an American movie out of *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, then, seems a paradoxical proposition. Not to mention a difficult one. How, after all, can a film adaptation effectively convey ideas which in the original book are communicated largely by way of leisurely discursive passages? (Though the novel's story is meant to make a statement about kitsch, without Kundera's intercalated glosses the typical reader could hardly be counted on to understand it.) What, moreover, can a filmmaker do with a text whose chief structural principle is not plot but argumentation, and whose characters are less flesh-and-blood humans than emblematic ciphers?

What the director Philip Kaufman (*The Right Stuff*) and his co-scenarist, Jean-Claude Carrière (*Belle du Jour, The Discreet Charm of the Bourgeoisie*), have done is to isolate the narrative segments of Kundera's novel, to put

[1]Grove Press, $16.95.

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them in chronological order (with a couple of significant exceptions), and to throw in an occasional line or two of dialogue that makes an awkwardly obtrusive reference to one or another of Kundera's central themes. The result is an unconventional but medium-voltage story about a randy young Prague brain surgeon named Tomas (Daniel Day-Lewis) and a sweet and charming country girl named Tereza (Juliette Binoche) who, against all odds, makes him her husband. The story's principal complications include (a) the aforementioned Sabina (Lena Olin), a sexy avant-garde artist who is Tomas's frequent bedmate and who, we are told, understands him best; and (b) the 1968 Soviet invasion, in the wake of which Tomas and Tereza move to Geneva (where they live very well), then back to Prague (where he must work as a window washer, she as a barmaid), and finally to a collective farm (where they find bucolic bliss).

The film is temperate, steadily paced, strikingly photographed (by Sven Nykvist), moderately disjunctive, and (in spite of the inevitable T. & A.) surprisingly tame. But what, for a viewer who hasn't read the book, does it all add up to? My guess is that, while such a viewer will probably recognize the filmmakers' intention to convey a host of complex and recondite ideas, and might well find this intention vaguely impressive and even intellectually challenging, he would not, in the end, quite be able to make out what those ideas are. Indeed, even a reader of the novel has the feeling, while viewing the movie, that the significance of one story development after another is constantly hovering just beyond his grasp.

Take Tomas and Tereza's departure from Switzerland. Why, a viewer innocent of Kundera may wonder, do they abandon the comforts of Geneva for certain misery back home in Prague? All one has to go on is Tereza's enigmatic remark to the effect that life in Switzerland is too "light," and that she pines for the "heaviness" of life in Soviet-occupied Czechoslovakia. In the novel one understands this peculiar motivation, more or less, for Kundera helpfully expatiates upon the concepts of "heaviness" and "lightness," which, along with kitsch, form the book's thematic foundation. But in the film, the return to Czechoslovakia seems quite incomprehensible. Similarly, such matters as Sabina's hat fetish and Tereza's attraction to photography, which in the novel are pregnant with meaning, seem arbitrary details when they occur in the film, divorced from Kundera's thorough explanations. Then there's our supposed hero, Tomas. "You are the complete opposite of kitsch," Sabina tells him in bed, and presumably we're meant to see that he deserves this compliment in some way, that he embodies some fundamental Kunderesque ideal. But mostly, alas, the Tomas of the film comes off as a jerk; only toward the end, when he becomes a devoted husband, does he begin to earn one's sympathy.

Interestingly, the film's most successful sequences are frankly sentimental, and would almost certainly be classified by Kundera as kitsch. I'm speaking of sequences which show Tomas and Tereza content together at last in the countryside; which show them suffering over their dying dog, Karenin; and which feature a good-natured elderly villager and the beloved pet pig who accompanies him everywhere. (If nothing else, this has been a good year for endearing performances by pigs—see my review last month of *The Milagro Beanfield War.*) Though Kundera mentions the old man and his pig, and dwells at some length upon Tomas and Tereza's rural life and upon their love for Karenin, the film's treatment of these matters is considerably more expansive than the novel's. What's more, the film's very effective ending doesn't come from Kundera's book at all, and the point which that ending makes, wonderfully touching and appropriate though it is, doesn't have much of anything to do with the themes that animate the novel.

If, in spite of all this, the film is highly engaging, one major reason is its wealth of strong performances. Juliette Binoche is perfect as the sweet Tereza, and Lena Olin manages to capture both the vivacity and the vulnerability necessary for the role of Sabina. The astonishingly versatile Daniel Day-Lewis, who played a Cockney street tough in *My Beautiful Laundrette* and an effete Edwardian snob in *A Room with a View,* proves equally convincing here as the libidinous young Czech doctor; *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* is worth seeing if only to watch this splendid actor at work.

Also worth seeing is *The Manchurian Candidate,* the 1962 John Frankenheimer political thriller which is currently in re-release. Adapted by George Axelrod from the novel by Richard Condon, this weirdly forceful film introduces us to Staff Sergeant Raymond Shaw (Laurence Harvey), who wins the Medal of Honor in the Korean War for taking out a company of enemy infantry; to his rich, domineering mother (Angela Lansbury) and his despised stepfather, Senator John Iselin (James Gregory)—a Joe McCarthy-type demagogue—who are eager to make political hay out of his success; and to Captain Ben Marco (Frank Sinatra), who, believing himself to have witnessed Shaw's heroic action during a four-day period when they and their Army patrol were incommunicado in the Korean countryside, recommended him for the medal.

Once everyone's back in the States, however, Marco begins to have nightmares which present a shockingly different version of that four-day period. He comes to realize that the encounter with the enemy company is a fiction, and that during those four days he, Shaw, and their entire patrol were abducted, flown to Manchuria, and brainwashed by a team of Soviet scientists, who erased the memory of their abduction and imprinted on their minds a "memory" of Shaw's imaginary heroic action. But to what evil purpose? Gradually we—and Marco—discover that the Soviets have rendered Shaw vulnerable to post-hypnotic suggestion, and that they seek, through him, to gain control of the biggest prize of all: the Presidency of the United States.

It's a bizarre, audacious story, which at times seems to be making fun of Americans who attribute too great a capacity for elaborate and evil ingenuity to the Communists and at other times seems to share their fears, and Frankenheimer's characteristic tone and style—dark and intense, hard-edged and high-contrast—suits the material perfectly. At various points one recalls such other Frankenheimer films as *Seven Days in May* and *The Train* (which, like *The Manchurian Candidate,* is a story of totalitarianism and large-scale deception—the only difference being that in *The Train* the good guys are the ones doing the deceiving).

But one is reminded especially of his 1966 film *Seconds,* in which a frustrated middle-aged businessman contracts with a secret medical conglomerate that fakes his death and transforms him surgically into a handsome, virile, and young-looking Rock Hudson; yet the conglomerate has more surgery planned—shall we say?—than the man bargained for. Like *Seconds, The Manchurian Candidate* offers a stark, black-and-white, tilted-camera's-eye vision of a Kafkaesque world in which things are not as they seem. Both films present an agreeable illusion—in *Seconds,* an illusion of the possibility of starting a new life, and in *Candidate,* an illusion of wartime heroics—beneath which lies a horrific reality; in both films the horror consists in the use of ultra-sophisticated (indeed, well-nigh fantastic) scientific processes in the service of a clandestine, subversive, and profoundly evil power.

To be sure, *The Manchurian Candidate* is not quite the classic that some reviewers have claimed it to be. It seemed to this viewer, for one thing, that there would be much easier ways for the Soviets to get someone to do their bidding than to devise such an elaborate and improbable scheme. But the film is nonetheless very gripping, more compelling by far than most thrillers of the present day. Perhaps the best thing about its re-release is that it draws deserved attention to a director, John Frankenheimer, who is responsible for some of the most striking films of his time. □

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SPECTATOR'S JOURNAL

A BRIEF MEETING IN GENEVA

by David Evanier

A man in his sixties, he glowed like a light bulb. His arm in an orange sling, red shirt, he looked dashing. Brisk color, fine skin. Slim. He resembled Barry Goldwater. He carried a thick paperback book.

When our plane was grounded in Geneva, he sat down at my table at the airport restaurant.

"Broke my shoulder skiing. Only New York can do this operation—fractures—properly. But my doctor won't wait for me. Three days is the limit on this. I've already used up two." He opened a bottle of wine. "Name is Levin. I'm on pain killers. Only way to get through this is to get stoned. Where are you coming from?"

"Israel. I live in New York City."

"They're losing $100 million in P.R. on this business in the Gaza. Should have used water tanks. Flatten them with water. They can't swim anyway; let them drown. Hose them down.

"But it looks bad. Or have the soldiers throw rocks back at them. That would be funny. Wouldn't that be funny, don't you think?" He laughed.

"Are you in business?" I asked.

"Years ago. Textiles. Where do you live in New York?"

"The Village."

"War zone. Homosexuals dying off."

"And you?"

"West Palm Beach. Four months in East Hampton. It can be delicious in New York those four months. Absolutely delicious. But why do you live in New York?"

"I like it."

"But you don't know how you'd feel about other places. That's the trouble with people. They form opinions without knowing. Why don't you pick up and move to some other city? Move to Aspen. Wonderful. You've never been to Aspen, have you?"

"No. I'd rather not."

"But how do you know without moving there? People don't want to make moves because they're afraid. Go to Aspen for three months."

"Move there?"

"Why not?"

He poured another glass of wine.

"Take this lunch we're eating. This veal." He pointed at the chicken, which was rubbery. "These fluffy potatoes, and fresh peas. This is a better meal than you'd get at any of your Village restaurants—the good ones—at fifty dollars per person. The Swiss did this with absolutely no notice. Fix up 200 extra meals of superb quality."

"Where did you grow up?" I asked.

"Brooklyn. Erasmus High School. What business are you in?"

"I'm writing a book. On Soviet Jewry."

"I'm reading Armand Hammer's autobiography. Twelve-hundred pages. Great man. That's a book you should read. His father was a Communist and framed by the government. Hammer made a million by the time he was 26. I met him at the White House. He's 83, and he looks younger than you. He even looks younger than me."

"No kidding?"

"What Jew has ever exerted such power with the Russians? Bad time for your book. People are bored with the subject. Except conservatives."

"You met Hammer at a party?"

"A tennis reception."

He began his third glass. "The Jews aren't being sent to Siberia anymore. Change your subject. You don't mind making money, do you?"

"Not at all."

"I always went where the dollar was good. I came to Geneva fourteen years ago. Always followed the dollar. People don't understand anything. You know where's best now?"

"No."

"The United States."

He poured mustard on the chicken. "Anyway, why write about Russia when America is just as bad?"

I stared at him.

"I learned in the sixties. My son made me see. A million kids were destroyed on drugs. Cocaine. Nixon, that psychopath.

"I was in Washington Square Park with my son. 1968. He was going to Berkeley, where he'd been radicalized. This boy had chased a squirrel up a tree. The squirrel went up higher. The boy scrambled up after him. A crowd gathered. The police came. They had riot helmets. They called to the boy to come down. It was a test. Then they called for reinforcements. A hundred police were soon surrounding that tree. The kid—he had a beard—wouldn't come down.

"The squirrel darted away. The boy was laughing. The crowd was laughing. Lovefest. The police were furious. Shaking their clubs. They demanded he come down. And suddenly the boy did a flip, a somersault, down the tree onto the ground. It was beautiful. The crowd applauded and cheered. He was grinning.

"And the pigs descended on him. They clubbed him. They beat him to a bloody pulp. The crowd protested, but they wouldn't stop. My son said to me, 'Now do you understand, Dad?' And I did."

He paused, looking at me, waiting.

"That's a good story," I said. "You told it well."

I stood up and said I had to make a phone call.

"That's all you have to say? A good story?"

"I didn't mean it was fiction. I meant it was an incident. It doesn't prove a thing."

"You're not an anti-Communist, are you?" he said.

"Yes. Yes I am."

"Well, what kind of anti-Communist are you? Are you anti-Chinese? Are you anti-Yugoslav?"

I didn't want to make a speech.

"I get your drift. I don't agree with it," I said. I began to move off.

He held up his glass. "Here's an idea for the book you should be writing. Two men exchange planes. A Russian winds up in Harlem, living among the blacks, impoverished, no hope, drugs. And a black goes to Russia, where he's a writer, living among the elite. Now *there's* a plot. Which one would you rather be, the black or the Russian?"

I waved goodbye, and he went back to Armand Hammer. □

David Evanier is a research specialist with the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

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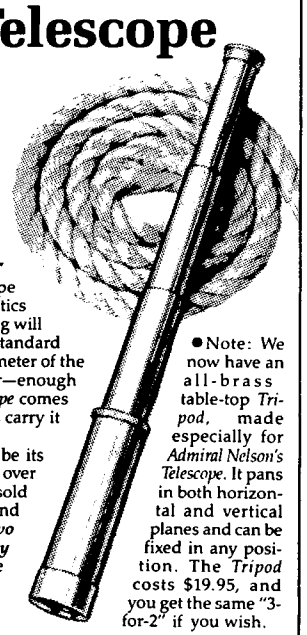

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE RISE AND FALL OF THE GREAT POWERS: ECONOMIC CHANGE AND MILITARY CONFLICT FROM 1500 TO 2000

Paul Kennedy/Random House/$24.95

Paul Johnson

The fuss made in the United States about this book surprises Europeans, and amuses them too. Perhaps it tells us more about the techniques of hype in the U.S. publishing industry, and the state of mind of U.S. liberals—who seem to have fallen eagerly on the text as a master plan for reducing America's overseas and defense commitments—than it does about America's real predicament. The book was certainly worth publishing, because it has initiated a useful debate on the role of United States power in the world, and how and whether it should be sustained.

But is it worth reading? That depends on how much time you have on your hands. The first half is a long summary of the rise and fall of Hapsburg Spain, of Bourbon and Napoleonic France, and of the British Empire. This kind of large-scale potted history is extremely difficult to carry off, and I am afraid Professor Kennedy does not know how to do it. The need to cover the ground in a limited space reduces him to such feeble devices as encapsulating leading figures with a single adjective. Thus Henri IV is "charismatic," Richelieu "influential," Wallenstein "powerful"; Gustavus Adolphus is also "influential" but "attractive" as well, lucky fellow; Czar Alexander I is "messianic," Nicholas I merely "autocratic"; Pitt the Younger is "assertive" (Elder and Younger Pitts, incidentally, are conflated in the index). My advice to the reader is to skip the whole of the first half and begin the book on page 347. For the second half, covering the last half-century, the professor is familiar with the sources and has a lot of instructive things to say; he also has a great many fascinating statistical tables, though perhaps they do not prove as much as he seems to think.

The main thesis of the book is that there is an unavoidable correlation between economic and military power, and that when the economic power of a state exercising hegemony or paramountcy begins to decline, relative to others in the game, its military power, and so its political influence, is likely to decline too, sooner or later. In a sense this proposition is so obvious as to be a truism, and is scarcely worth stating, let alone writing a 650-page book about. But Kennedy also argues, or rather appears to suggest (he tends to qualify or retract his major assertions), that the effort to prolong a paramountcy in a military sense after the economic power has passed its peak merely accelerates the relative economic decline. He hints that this has been happening to the United States and that its best course now is to reduce its physical outlays and concentrate on rebuilding its non-military economy. These are much more contentious points and amount to expressions of opinion rather than truths which can be demonstrated from the historical evidence. Anyone who has followed British politics closely for the last thirty years will be familiar with such arguments, in relation to British overseas commitments. They are strongly held on the center-left of the spectrum but remain unproven.

Moreover, they beg the question of what motivates a major power in building or maintaining large military establishments. In an excellent review of the Kennedy book in *Foreign Affairs*, Professor W. W. Rostow has pointed out that it confuses powers which seek to establish a position of hegemony, like Napoleonic France in Europe, and powers which merely wish to preserve a certain balance of power, like England and (Rostow argues) the United States. Certainly, if one examines English policy at the Anglo-Spanish talks at Somerset House in 1604, or the Treaty of Utrecht (1713) or the Congress of Vienna (1814-15) or the Treaty of Versailles (1919), the one thread running consistently through them all is the desire for a secure and durable settlement which will allow military spending to be drastically reduced. Hegemony, or even paramountcy (except in limited areas of special interest), was never an objective.

If we examine American policy in the period since 1945, similar aims were predominant. Even in the nineteenth century, when Britain was at the height of its relative economic power, governments of all complexions were usually most reluctant to accept new commitments. That has been the pattern of U.S. policy, too. One of the tragedies of the 1930s, as the British see it, was the inability of their governments to persuade the United States to undertake any kind of physical role in Europe. I well remember the almost desperate eagerness with which postwar British and French governments pressed the U.S. to accept an obligation to keep troops on the eastern side of the Atlantic, and the universal relief when Washington agreed to do so on a permanent basis. The United States, it seems to me, has always been a most reluctant superpower, and the fundamental instincts of the American people, I fear, are still isolationist.

Where I go further than Professor Rostow is in questioning some of Kennedy's assumptions about the drive to hegemony of the powers. I doubt if there was ever any Hapsburg plan to establish a European hegemony, more an unwillingness to surrender any of the rights of the family firm, including the right to impose a religious settlement of the prince's choosing. In all the wars the Hapsburgs undertook in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, dynastic and religious factors were the most important; they did not need a Professor Kennedy to warn them about the dangers of overstretching their resources in schemes of world conquest, since they went bankrupt often enough. In seventeenth-century France there was, it is true, an expansionist party, particularly in Sully's day, but Louis XIV's so-called "wars of conquest" may have been the result more of faction-fighting at the French court, as the latest research suggests, than any deliberate and considered scheme to dominate Europe. Napoleon, to be sure, had global, or at any rate continental, visions; but it is odd that he should have agreed to the Louisiana Purchase, recognized even at the time as an extraordinary act of largesse. The

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Paul Johnson is the author of Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Eighties, The History of Christianity, *and* A History of the Jews.

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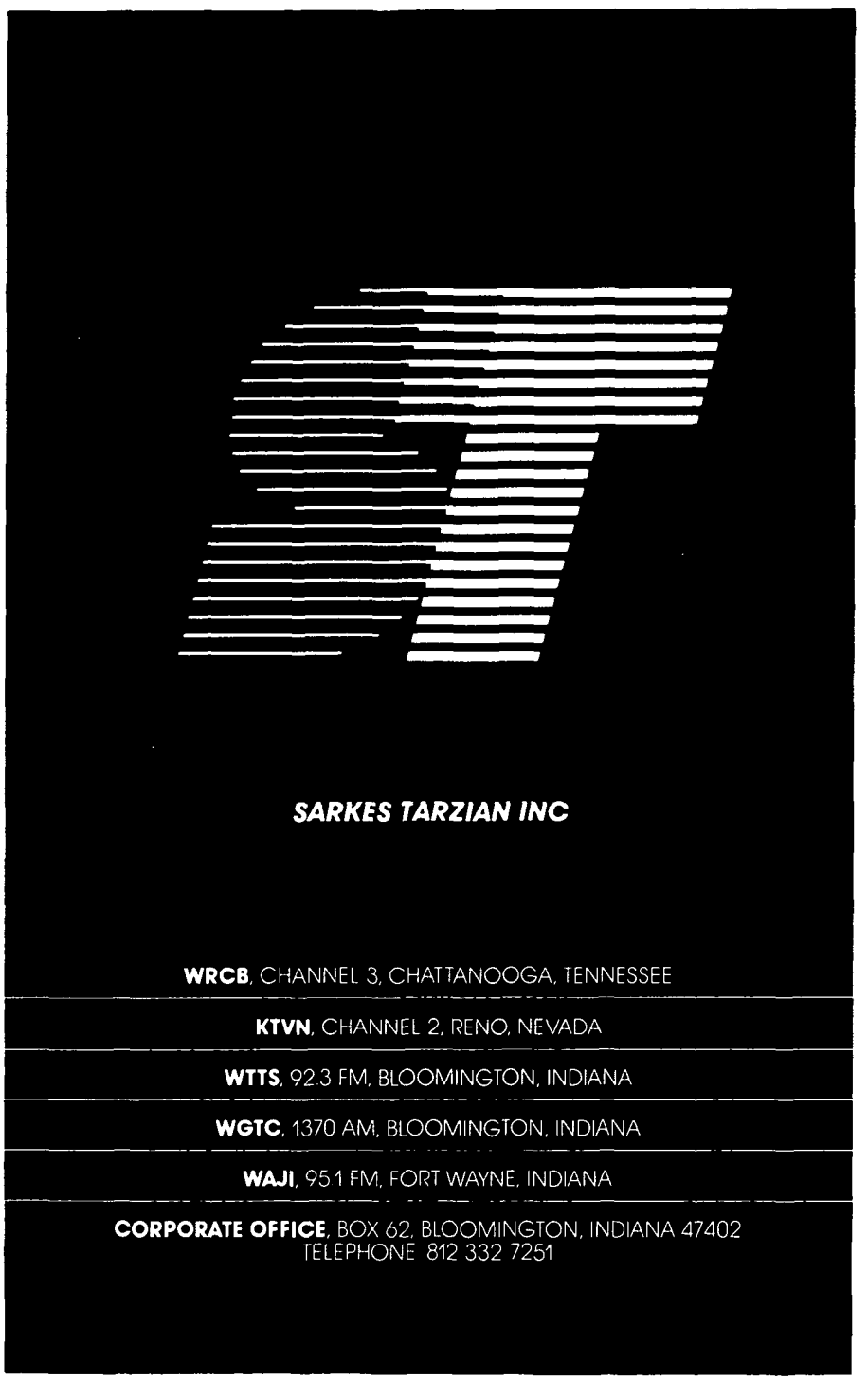
states which most obviously fit into the pattern Kennedy seeks to impose on history are Hitlerite Germany and Russia, but both raise more problems for his general thesis than they solve.

If, for instance, the Hitler regime had been content with the frontiers established in the autumn of 1938 by the Munich settlement, as most Germans wanted, it is likely that Germany would have established a military-political paramountcy in Europe without having to fight for it, and would be maintaining it to this day. Germany's power collapsed as a result of Hitler's reckless miscalculations—the mistakes of a single individual—rather than because of some inexorable laws of military-economic correlation.

The case of Russia is even more interesting and mysterious because Russia has always, during the past 400 years, maintained a military establishment and pursued schemes of territorial aggrandizement, well beyond her apparent economic resources. Because of this, the Czarist empire, and its Soviet successor, have always looked both menacing and fragile—vertiginous is perhaps the word. Old-style diplomats in the nineteenth century used to have a saying about it: "Russia is never as strong as she looks. Russia is never as weak as she looks." The truth of this admittedly ambiguous maxim has been demonstrated time and again. Napoleon could certainly have fenced Russia out of eastern Europe, had he chosen. Japan could have destroyed the Russian position in East Asia in the first decade of the twentieth century, had not other great powers prevented her. Again, Ludendorf had beaten Russia in 1918 and would have destroyed her as a major European power, had he not lost the war on the Western front. Hitler was certainly in a position to "tame" the Soviet Union in 1941, possibly by changing the regime; what prevented him from doing so was not the lack of physical power but the logic of his race ideology. Russia survived as a great power and indeed became a superpower as much as a result of chance and accident, and the sheer will of first Lenin, then Stalin, as by virtue of its economic strength.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Indeed, a further weakness of Kennedy's book—to my mind its fundamental weakness—is that its quasi-deterministic approach, and the exaggerated stress it places on economic factors, itself reflecting the unconscious Marxist assumptions of the modern campus, makes far too little allowance for the importance of will in the shaping of great events. The more I study history, the more convinced I am that what happens is influenced as much by the willpower of key individuals as by the underlying pressure of collective forces. If we look at the interwar period, for instance, the history of Europe was settled to a great extent by the overwhelming personalities of two extraordinary men, Hitler and Stalin. Without them, events would have taken a totally different course, just as the history of Europe in the twenty years 1795-1815 would have been almost unimaginably transformed without Napoleon.

What history teaches is also confirmed, in my view, by the experience of life. In my time, three particular episodes brought home to me the importance of will in events. The first was in the early summer of 1940, when I was eleven years of age. France had collapsed and made a separate peace, and Britain's position was increasingly desperate. I recall a conversation with my father, who had fought through the First World War, was extremely well informed, and was only too well aware of the nature of our plight. He could not conceal his pessimism from me, and at my insistence explained the reasons for it in detail. He knew a great deal and I knew nothing at all, but I was not convinced by what he said because I had heard Churchill, who had just taken over as prime minister, on the radio, and was completely captured by his defiant—and to my father's mind, vainglorious—rhetoric. Churchill had nothing really to contribute except his will, but it was a very strong will, and in the event it was enough to enable us to survive and turn the tide. So I, in my ignorance, was proved right, and my father, in his knowledge and wisdom, wrong.

Again, I was an eyewitness to events in France in the 1950s. The last years of the Fourth Republic were ones of unrelieved gloom, especially as France's decline did not seem to be a temporary or even a novel phenomenon, but part of a demoralizing process that had been going on, with brief interruptions, since 1815. Reporting from Paris, I used to write articles with titles like "The Sick Man of Europe," the analogy being with nineteenth-century Turkey. Of course, looking back on the 1950s with the advantage of hindsight, one can identify a number of hopeful factors in France's society and economy. But no one was aware of them at the time; or, if so, he kept his optimism to himself. All the indicators we could discern pointed downward. Then, in the appalling crisis of 1958, Charles de Gaulle returned to power and in just a decade turned France right around. Her economy was integrated, her political influence restored, and, perhaps most important, the French themselves came to believe that their country had a future again. All kinds of factors contributed to this transformation, which reversed a decline lasting over 150 years, but the biggest single one was de Gaulle's own massive will. Indeed, without it, the revival of France would not have taken place.

I used to cite the case of de Gaulle single-handedly restoring France to national health as an outstanding example of the impact of will on politics which I had actually witnessed, little thinking I would see an equally impressive demonstration in my own country. Already it is becoming difficult to recall the sheer hopelessness and despondency of British public life in the 1970s. The relative decline in the economy seemed inexorable. The contempt in which Britain was held, almost universally, was apparent immediately one traveled abroad, and moves were afoot to formalize the loss of status by depriving Britain of her place as a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council. At home, the trade unions were aimlessly destroying not only the economy but the very rule of law itself. The way in which Margaret Thatcher, taking office in June 1979, set about the systematic restoration of British power, influence, and self-confidence, recalled the arrival of Churchill nearly forty years before, though the real comparison was with de Gaulle's work in France. Initially at any rate, Mrs. Thatcher got precious little support even from her own cabinet colleagues, let alone a nervous party and a demoralized nation. Again, it was a superb demonstration of willpower by one exceptionally clear-sighted, self-assured, and obstinate person.

Having watched the power of will at work three times in my own lifetime, pushing on the hinge of history and turning the door against the apparent pressure of events, I have no doubt that it is a major factor in determining the destiny of nations, and that historians must allow for its importance—as of course the good ones have always done. Naturally willpower alone is not enough. There must be a minimal physical basis of power from which it can

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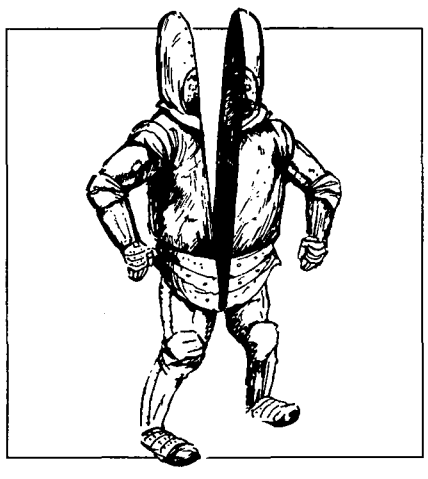
operate. Frederick the Great saved the Prussian state from disaster during the Seven Years War by prodigies of willpower, but he still possessed the nucleus of an excellent army. In the spring of 1945, Hitler and Goebbels, sitting in their Berlin bunker, read the brilliant account of Frederick's survival in the biography by Thomas Carlyle—an outstanding exponent of the power of will in history—and drew comfort from it. But by then, of course, the German war machine had already been destroyed, and no amount of willpower could have saved the Third Reich. To be effective in history, the human will must be combined with judgment and realism.

I offer these reflections for the benefit of American opinion-formers who are inclined to accept the arguments which Kennedy's book seems to support, that the relative decline in U.S. power is inevitable and will probably accelerate and that the best option for the U.S. is a well-managed and graceful abdication of responsibilities. In point of fact this argument is not exactly new. It was put about frequently in the 1970s, a dispiriting and in some ways disastrous decade for the United States. As early as March 1968 the Treasury had impressed on Lyndon Johnson that the country simply could not afford both rising expenditure on the Vietnam war and the expanding Great Society program. He was dismayed by the news because it was the first time the United States had come up against the physical limitations of its resources in determining policy. Therein lay the origin of the decision to extricate America from Vietnam, in itself a reasonable one. But what followed in the wake of the Watergate abdication was a collapse of national will which was harrowing to observe. I spent the year 1980, the last of the debilitating Carter presidency, in Washington. Observing the way the administration operated, I lost confidence, for the first time, in the ability of the United States to lead the West. But again, over the last eight years, we have all been able to watch an impressive restoration of American self-confidence and resolve. The turnaround has been much less sensational than in Britain, and less attributable to the willpower of a single personality. But it is nonetheless remarkable, particularly since at no time has President Reagan's party controlled both houses of Congress.

Indeed it is probably true to say that United States power in the world, in relation to the Soviet Union's, has actually increased over the last eight years, after a quarter-century of relative decline. That is another example of the influence of will on geopolitics. The way ahead is not going to be easy, as *Discriminate Deterrence*, the recently released report of the President's Commission on Integrated Long Term Strategy, makes abundantly clear. But it indicates that there are no insuperable physical reasons why the United States should not continue its limited role of preserving peace and maintaining roughly the present power balance up to the year 2010 and beyond. That is as far as anyone needs to see. According to the report's forward projections of economic growth, America's chief military rival, the USSR, will have sunk to fourth place in the table by 2010—fifth if you count the European Community as a single power. The United States, with an economy of nearly $8 trillion, will still be producing nearly twice as much as its nearest rival, China, with an economy of under $4 trillion.

It is worth recalling that U.S. military spending, as a percentage of GNP, has fallen from about 13 percent during the Korean War to 6-7 percent today—halved, in fact. The likelihood is that it will fall still further during the next decade, especially if both the E.C. powers and Japan, as seems likely, increase their contribution. These are welcome developments, and no one doubts that, other things being equal, a nation is healthier if it spends less rather than more on its armed forces. But other things are not always equal, and a prudent level of defense should be regarded as a necessary overhead, like insurance and repair and maintenance, in the continuing life of any economy. That level has to be determined by a careful balance of what a nation believes it can afford with what it likewise believes is the minimum necessary to preserve its security. Both of these involve subjective judgments, and there will always be argument about whether the right balance has been struck. What would be foolish, however, would be to follow Paul Kennedy's advice and begin a systematic scaling down of American political and military efforts in the world on the basis of a theoretical view of history which exaggerates the economic factors while ignoring the human ones. □



WASHINGTON GOES TO WAR
David Brinkley/Alfred A. Knopf/$18.95

Brit Hume

For decades, David Brinkley has prepared for a live broadcast on election night or at a political convention in the same way. He reads through mounds of research looking for nuggets of color and anecdote. He writes them down in longhand in a black looseleaf notebook now frayed from years of use. By the time he goes on the air, he has most of these notes memorized, and from them he draws the material he recounts on the air, often with a sardonic chuckle.

In a sense, Brinkley's *Washington Goes to War* is his black notebook on the city of Washington during World War II. This 282-page volume is distilled from sixteen legal-size file drawers filled with research, much of it gathered for Brinkley by Harvard students under the direction of Brinkley's son, Alan, a Harvard history professor. The book's basic structure is drawn from Brinkley's memory of wartime Washington, where he was a young reporter newly arrived from North Carolina.

It is a richly readable account, written with elegance and flair, and a reviewer finds it irresistibly quotable. There is, for example, this passage describing the New Dealers whose energetic presence had already done much to change the atmosphere of Washington before the war: "They were social workers, farm economists, liberal lawyers, union organizers, all of them political chiropractors eager to get their thumbs on the national spine, to snap it and crack it until the blood again flowed outward to all the extremities of American life, returning it to health and prosperity."

But it is anecdotal detail that makes Brinkley's description of drowsy, rigidly segregated prewar Washington vivid. Then, and for many years to come, it was a place to which poor blacks migrated by the thousands, hoping for a better life and usually not finding it. They lived in desperate circumstances, often in alley hovels converted from stables. There were 15,000 privies in the city limits of Washington before the war. They stood in striking contrast to the genteel formality observed by some better-off whites. Despite the jungle heat of Washington summers, Brinkley reports, some men still wore lightweight white wool suits. "When they sent their flannels to Mr. Viner at the Sunshine Cleaners on Mount Pleasant Street, he took each suit completely apart at the seams, stitch by stitch, hand-washed each flannel piece separately, laid them all out on the roof to let the sun dry them out and bleach out the yellowness and then sewed them back together and pressed the reassembled suit. All this took one week—longer in cloudy weather—and cost ten dollars."

The author's eye for human vice and excess, apparent in his politi cal broadcasts, is even more evident here. Brinkley describes at length the remarkable tolerance the government displayed for the diplomats of Germany and its allies in the days before the U.S. entered the war. He depicts the ambassador from France's Vichy government as a whining, conniving pipsqueak who used his embassy for all manner of pro-Nazi activities. "It was bizarre," writes Brinkley. "An ambassador for America's oldest ally, claiming to represent France, but in fact representing the Fascist government of Pierre Laval, who looked in news pictures like a likely candidate for a rat trap. An Ambassador who had turned his embassy into a base for Nazi spies."

There were more reasons than espionage for these diplomats to remain in prewar Washington. The city, writes Brinkley, "had well-stocked stores, interesting women, Cuban cigars, docile black servants willing to work at low pay—in all a far more pleasant life than they could hope for in their own countries." And there was money to be made by padding expense accounts and passing on newspaper information as the fruits of diligent spying. "And so they remained, a gaggle of fascists representing rulers who deserved the gallows, enjoying life in a city where that was still possible, spying and propagandizing while swindling their own governments on the side."

There are two things missing from

Brit Hume, a Washington native born during World War II, covers Congress and works with David Brinkley at ABC News.

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this book, happily. One is a lot of talk about Brinkley himself. He makes a few appearances, anonymously, as a "young reporter," or a "reporter from NBC." That's all. Also absent is any hint of political bias. The book is full of Brinkley's sometimes caustic opinions, but there is no sign they spring from any political philosophy. For example, he has been quoted as saying Franklin Roosevelt was a great President, but Roosevelt's shortcomings as the administrator of a burgeoning government are amply detailed. "This weakness," he writes, "would in time be costly to Roosevelt and to the country, and the cost would be counted in the coin of delay, confusion and waste. The United States eventually was prepared for war, but at far greater cost than if presidential leadership had been more exacting and if administrative power had been detailed quickly and firmly."

Others come off far worse. Second only to the Nazis in Brinkley's scornful eye seems to be Congress, whose foibles, both institutional and individual, are detailed in depth and brutally summarized. "Among the thousands of people loaded onto the government payroll were the hacks and misfits ordered hired by members of Congress who never saw the war as any reason to change their old habit of loading the federal payroll with their friends, hangers-on, unsatisfactory sons-in-law, unemployable cousins, courthouse idlers, maiden aunts fallen into straitened circumstances and relatives addicted to the bottle."

As the war raged on in 1944, the Senate was hard at work on a successful filibuster to block repeal of the poll tax, a fight whose outcome, unlike that of the war, was never in doubt. "While four thousand American bombers attacked Germany," writes Brinkley, "while the Russians recaptured Sevastopol from the Germans, while allied troops in Italy opened a spring offensive, and while Americans in New Guinea fought their way onto two Japanese-held islands, the Senate played through its scripted and choreographed performance."

Part of the problem was that Congress couldn't run the war or the nation's foreign policy (though that has not kept it from trying repeatedly to run both war and diplomacy since), so it didn't have enough to do. But it could spend money, and did, then as now. "It was simply the way the government worked, in both war and peace, although in wartime it was worse. The single fact most clearly differentiating government employers from private employers was, always, that government agencies did not have to earn their money. Congress simply handed it over every year and almost always more than the year before, so it was there to be spent and it was unthinkable not to spend it. Nobody in government ever benefitted in any way from saving money. Whatever was not spent had to be handed back to the Treasury and if an agency had money left over at the end of one year, how could it ask Congress for more money the next year?" Sound familiar?

Yet even in dealing with Congress, Brinkley seeks to be evenhanded. "It was not the system," he says, "that made the wartime Congresses unruly, politicized, argumentative, unresponsive and occasionally vulgar. It was the course of American history."

The war, of course, was largely responsible for the phenomenal growth of Washington in the 1940s. But with it came a new factor that has helped make government a growth industry ever since: income tax withholding. It was passed after much wrangling and took effect in July 1943. It was, says Brinkley, "a revolution in American public finance. When people became accustomed to paying taxes as they had always paid for automobiles—on the installment plan—Congress and the president learned, to their pleasure, what automobile salesmen had learned long before: that installment buyers could be induced to pay more because they looked not at the total debt but only at the monthly payments. . . . The term 'take-home-pay' now entered the language."

Throughout all this, the war, the shortages of housing and, during rationing, of nearly everything else, there was one surprising constant: an endless round of Washington parties that were extravagant even by the gaudy standards of today. When Cissy Patterson, empress of the Roosevelt-hating *Washington Times-Herald*, went out to dinner one night at Evalyn Walsh McLean's Georgetown house, Brinkley reports that she arrived just after a little custom had been observed in the McLean household. "Thomas Saltz drove out from his men's store downtown to do for the McLeans what they were unable or unwilling to do for themselves, tie the men's neckties." Mrs. McLean, of course, had no need of neckwear. She wore "the Hope diamond dangling down the front of a Hattie Carnegie dress."

Brinkley relates such details with evident relish and seeming ease. So it's surprising that this book came close to never being written. At the height of the popularity of "The Huntley-Brinkley Report" twenty-five years ago, Brinkley was besieged by publishers wanting a book from the famous anchorman. "I had almost a stock answer," Brinkley says. "I told them I didn't need the money, didn't need the notoriety, and didn't want to do the work." But as many of those who lived and worked in Washington during the war began to die off, Brinkley felt he was among the last who might be able to write such an account. "It seemed to me that there was nobody really competent to do that left, and I thought it was worth doing," he says. After starting it in 1972, though, Brinkley says he nearly abandoned the project many times, finally finishing it with the help of an IBM personal computer, which, he says, took much of the pain out of revision.

Brinkley describes *Washington Goes to War* as "less a work of history than of personal reminiscence and reflection." That gives Brinkley too much credit, and too little. Its framework and some of the detail may spring from the author's memory, but this book is plainly the product of extensive research—some of it done by Brinkley, but, as he acknowledges in the book, much of it done for him. And despite the author's protestations, it is an informative and unique history of what the book's subtitle calls "the transformation of a city and a nation." There is one inexplicable oversight: no index. Brinkley says he has no idea why, that he expected the publisher to provide one and was unpleasantly surprised to find otherwise. He should be. And the publisher, the esteemed Alfred A. Knopf & Co., should be ashamed. □

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FOR THE RECORD: FROM WALL STREET TO WASHINGTON
Donald T. Regan/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/$21.95

SPEAKING OUT: INSIDE THE REAGAN WHITE HOUSE
Larry Speakes with Robert Pack
Charles Scribner's Sons/$19.95

Fred Barnes

In a perverse way, these books are reassuring. If things are as bad at the White House as Don Regan and Larry Speakes claim, it's amazing the Reagan presidency didn't collapse years ago. But the opposite happened: Reagan is successful. His achievements—deep tax cuts, a military buildup, the Reagan Doctrine, the Strategic Defense Initiative, sustained economic growth without inflation, virtually full employment—overshadow the one glaring disaster of his administration, the Iran-contra affair. Given Reagan's airy, no-hands approach to the presidency, this must mean that his conservative policies had an awful lot of merit. Rigorous management had nothing to do with the President's success. It was absent.

The way to think about Reagan, I believe, is not how well he's done, but how much better his presidency might have been. Reagan is a success in spite of himself. His breathtaking indifference to governing held him back. But imagine what might have happened if he'd actually run the White House, instead of leaving everything to folks he barely knew, played no role in hiring, and declined to give instructions to. Imagine if Reagan had taken an interest in how his policies were being implemented. Imagine if he'd mastered the intricacies of nuclear arms negotiations. Imagine if he'd practiced and practiced and transformed himself into an answer machine at press conferences. If Jimmy Carter could do all these things, so could Ronald Reagan.

The argument Reagan apologists have made is that there's a tradeoff involved. Reagan stressed the inspirational side of the job, what Regan calls "the outer presidency," moving people and altering the Zeitgeist. Carter emphasized day-to-day activism in running the government. And who was the better President? Reagan, for sure. But there's a flaw in this reasoning. True, there's a tradeoff, but did it require that Reagan abandon the management side entirely in order to be a magnetic national leader? Of course not. The reason Reagan didn't manage is that he was lazy and didn't think it was as much fun as making speeches or lollygagging around the West Wing. He got away with it, but he could have done better. A little bit of Carter, or Nixon, or even Ford, would have made Reagan a more effective President. He wouldn't have had to keep tabs on the White House tennis courts, after all, just the National Security Council staff.

In an editorial on the kiss-and-tell books about the Reagan White House, the *Wall Street Journal* declared that the missing ingredient in the Administration is loyalty. Appointees being pulled down by "the Beltway maw," from Richard Allen to Ollie North, were not defended. "If you don't provide loyalty down, you can't expect loyalty up." I'll go along with that, but I think there were several other things missing—discipline and accountability, to name two. David Stockman was free to blab to William Greider, impugning Reagan's policies, without losing his job. At Cabinet meetings, officials openly contradicted Reagan's "ideas and promises," says Regan, and the President seldom spoke up and never chastised them. Speakes notes that Allen, Reagan's first national security adviser, "was the first person in the Reagan Administration to be hounded out of office by the press." But hardly the last, and Reagan acquiesced each time. Since Reagan imposed no discipline on his subordinates when they were in his administration, he certainly couldn't once they'd left. To me, the surprise is not that so many kiss-and-tell books have been written, but so few. James Watt, Ray Donovan, Richard Darman, Ed Rollins, and Pat Buchanan could tell a lot of wild and spicy tales out of school, but haven't.

The books by Regan, who was treasury secretary and White House chief of staff, and Speakes, Reagan's chief spokesman for six years, underscore three shortcomings in Reagan's style. Improvement in any of them would have made Reagan a better President. Improvement in all of them might have made him a great President.

The first is Reagan's utter indifference to personnel. Regan was happy but nonetheless appalled that the President almost instantly, and without a second thought, approved the job swap between Regan and James Baker in 1985. In his first term, Reagan had blithely acceded to the appointment of Baker as national security adviser, only to abrogate his decision when Caspar Weinberger, Bill Casey, Bill Clark, and Jeane Kirkpatrick objected. Reagan simply took the course of least resistance. In his waning days in the White House, Reagan finds himself surrounded by senior aides who are strangers. Reagan knew practically none of them before he became President. And in some cases, he'd never heard of them until he was well into his second term. The result is weak loyalty to Reagan—and from him.

One fellow who'd never have gotten a job if Reagan paid attention to hiring and firing is Speakes. He admits to being on the make in 1980, hoping to be White House press secretary to any Republican who won. Except for a brief encounter during the 1976 presidential campaign, Speakes hadn't met Reagan until January 19, 1981, the day before Reagan took office. By then, Speakes had been hired as deputy press secretary. Ten weeks later, he became chief spokesman when Jim Brady was shot during the assassination attempt on Reagan.

Speakes is no liberal, but he's not a Reaganite conservative either. As a student at the University of Mississippi, he criticized Governor Ross Barnett for refusing to sign a U.N. Day proclamation, perhaps the only worthwhile step Barnett ever took. Speakes says Jack Kemp is a pest. He calls Weinberger ("Whiny") one of the worst officials in Reagan's Cabinet. He says Buchanan "caused more trouble in only two years than anyone else who worked closely with Reagan during the first six years." Among Buchanan's sins was "always pushing right-wing ideologues to assume more and more of the speechwriting duties." Speakes cites Peggy Noonan, a speechwriter of dazzling talent, as an example. He gushes that "the secretary of defense of my dreams would have been Lee Iacocca," probably the most overrated man in the Western world. Speakes thinks the invasion of Grenada "could have been as big a public relations disaster for the Reagan Administration as the Iran-contra arms deal became three years later." He says "a conservative with intelligence" is "a rare species." And Reagan's "finest hour," according to Speakes, was when he nudged Ferdinand Marcos out as president of the Philippines. Is Speakes really what Reagan wanted in a press secretary? I doubt it. But Reagan was too detached to insist on anyone else.

The second shortcoming is Reagan's refusal to take charge of the White House. Orders and instructions don't often come from the President. Regan says he was "flying by the seat of my pants" as treasury secretary for four years. "The president never told me what he believed or what he wanted to accomplish in the field of economics. I had to figure these things out like any other American, by studying his speeches and reading the newspapers." Regan says it amounts to a "guesswork presidency." Aides are given extraordinary latitude. The President, says Regan, "trusted his lieutenants to act on his intentions, rather than his spoken instructions." In other words, they winged it. In 1985, State Department officials agreed to cut off aid to the mujahedeen once Soviet troops began pulling out of Afghanistan, even if the Soviets continued to aid the puppet Afghan government. This wasn't what Reagan wanted, but it was the kind of result his management style inevitably produced.

Regan argues repeatedly—and Speakes backs him up—that he wasn't the boss of Robert McFarlane, John Poindexter, and Ollie North. The national security adviser didn't report to the President through him. So the Iran-contra mess wasn't in any way his fault, despite what the Tower Commission said. That's hairsplitting. Regan should have known what the NSC staff was up to. Baker made sure he did during Reagan's first term. When he got wind of a private session between Reagan and, say, Clark, Baker would find out what the subject was. Reagan should have taken the trouble to see that his chief of staff in the second term was doing the same. If he had, there'd have been no Iran-contra, or at least it would have been less damaging. The arms sales might have gone through, but not the diversion of money to the contras. Is it too much to ask for Reagan to satisfy himself that his chief of staff is really in charge? I don't think so.

The third shortcoming is Nancy Reagan, who had a free rein and may still. The astrology business, while nothing to sneer at, was the least of the problem. She intervened in press affairs, in policy matters, in personnel, in scheduling. Her claim was always that she was protecting her husband, checking up to see whether he was being overworked or embarrassed. I think she was also protecting herself. She didn't want her husband associated with too many unfashionable conservative positions, like opposition to abortion or the belief that the Soviet Union is an "evil empire." These made for awkward moments with her socialite friends.

Nancy's machinations backfired. Ev-

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erything she did made her husband appear henpecked and weak. He didn't want to fire Regan as chief of staff, but she did. She prevailed. That made Reagan look like a marshmallow. But mostly he was out of the loop when it came to Nancy's unrelenting activity. She leaned on Speakes, Deaver, Regan, etc. All of them were too afraid of her to complain to the President. These two books reinforce the notion that Nancy is out of control, what Regan calls "the random factor" in the Administration. They also confirm that she's had an enormous influence. This would be fine if she limited her advice to Reagan alone. She forces it on everyone at the White House, and now the whole world knows.

What's the impact of these books? Plenty, I think. They're bound to taint the public's view of Reagan and his regime. People won't conclude suddenly that Reagan was another failed President. But they'll remember enough of the tidbits to know there were weird goings-on in the Reagan White House. The books will also marginally affect how history regards Reagan. Too many juicy details are now on the record to be ignored by historians. The Reagan Administration may not be downgraded too much, but Reagan himself will be. What can historians say about a President who let his wife fire official after official and gave her astrologer a veto over his schedule? That he's a take-charge guy? Don't count on it. □

OSCAR WILDE

Richard Ellmann/Alfred A. Knopf/$24.95

Aram Bakshian, Jr.

Choosing the title for his best remembered play, Oscar Wilde settled on *The Importance of Being Earnest: A Trivial Comedy for Serious People*. Perhaps someday an adequate, balanced biography of the great wit will be written, one that captures Wilde's brilliance as a conversationalist and as a light entertainer while also recognizing the unbearable heaviness of his self-conscious attempts at serious art. If it is, the title should be *The Importance of Being Oscar: A Serious Comedy for Trivial People*, for his life was a farce that ended in squalor if not tragedy and his literary work survives for the most part as thinly sliced bits of trivia, album scraps and disembodied bon mots memorized by middlebrow, would-be wits and aspiring bohemians devoid of originality.

What has kept these fragments of Wilde's extensive work alive—most of it now read only by scholars—is their creator's ability both to dazzle and disquiet drab people. The oil-slick iridescence of his word play worked its magic on generation after generation of academic coroners, scholarly but museless men who build their reputations on the celebrity of the corpses they dissect.

If the coroner is able and thorough enough, the results, even if not particularly insightful, may bring enough new information to light to justify the autopsy. Richard Ellmann's *Oscar Wilde*, a meticulously detailed but occasionally sycophantic examination of Wilde's life and letters, is a case in point. The late Professor Ellmann, who died at Oxford in 1987 shortly after completing this work, was a distinguished scholar who wrote, if not too wisely, all too well. He was an ardent admirer of Wilde, as he was of James Joyce, the subject of his other major literary biography. In both cases, his verbal facility and painstaking research allowed him to produce readable, informative lives. They also helped him to get away with claiming a bit more for his heroes than they probably deserve.

Thus, in his fulsome introduction to *Oscar Wilde*, Professor Ellmann claims more for his subject than that far from wilting lily ever pretended to:

> While the ultimate virtue of Wilde's essays is in make-believe, the denouement of his dramas and narratives is that masks have to go. We must acknowledge what we are. Wilde at least was keen to do so. Though he offered himself as the apostle of pleasure, his created world contains much pain. In the smashup of his fortunes rather than in their apogee his cast of mind fully appeared.
>
> Essentially Wilde was conducting, in the most civilized way, an anatomy of his society, and a radical reconsideration of its ethics. He knew all the secrets and could expose all the pretense. Along with Blake and Nietzsche, he was proposing that good and evil are not what they seem, that moral tabs cannot cope with the complexity of behavior. His greatness as a writer is partly the result of the enlargement of sympathy which he demanded for society's victims.

One suspects its subject, though flattered, would have found this effusion embarrassing and vaguely comic. But if Wilde would have tittered at the above, the shade of Samuel Johnson would have bellowed his wrath at the following comparison a few lines later:

"Some of . . . [Wilde's] interest lies in a characteristic that, along with girth, he shared with Dr. Johnson. He occupied, as he insisted, a 'symbolic relation' to his time. He ranged over the visible and invisible worlds, and dominated them by his unusual views. He is not one of those writers who as the centuries change lose their relevance. Wilde is one of us [here, the reader might be forgiven for interjecting, à la Tonto, "What you mean *us*, Mauve Man?"]. His wit is an agent of renewal, as pertinent now as a hundred years ago. The questions posed by both his art and his life lend his art a quality of earnestness, an earnestness which he also disavowed."

In so disavowing, Wilde took a more down to earth view of his life and art than Professor Ellmann. Unlike his biographer, he seems to have caught on to his limitations and basic fatuity. Toward the end of his life, Wilde found himself guilty of committing the one, to him, unforgivable sin: He began to bore himself. This inward realization of failure, and his continued passion for that thoroughly nasty little piece of work, Lord Alfred Douglas, with the attendant, self-inflicted scandal (it was Wilde who insisted on going to court in the first place, knowing that he was guilty in the eyes of the law) left him without illusions, and painfully aware of the tawdriness of most of the aesthetics he had claimed to live by as well as write about.

He did the right thing; he stopped writing, dying under sordid circumstances after spending a few years as a wandering remittance man. According to one of the doctors present, a contributory cause was syphilis, which might also explain some of his emotional follies in the years immediately preceding his fall.

It is a sad story, but not a particularly tragic one. Nobody pushed Oscar Wilde; he jumped. The great, flabby, sequined slug, captured forever by Max Beerbohm's later caricatures, was an ugly indulger in quest of unattainable beauty. In its passage, the slug left a few slimy but shimmering traces of its course, most notably in aphorisms and entertaining drawing room comedies. But even these probably caused more harm than good, spawning several generations of inferior imitators who calcified the London stage and kept English drama a bloodless admixture of simpering and sighing for another half century. Wilde's debased legacy ended only with the deaths of Noël Coward and Terence Rattigan, though, in fairness to Coward, he never claimed to be anything but an entertainer.

It is considered as an entertainer, and an amiable bon vivant, that Wilde deserves remembering. Max Beerbohm, reminiscing in his own old age, recalled that " . . . in the beginning, he was the most enchanting company, don't you know. His conversation was so simple and natural and flowing—not at all epigrammatic, which would have been unbearable. He saved that for his plays, thank heaven. . . . But, you know, as Oscar became more and more successful, he became . . . arrogant. He felt himself omnipotent, and he became gross not in body only—he did become that—but in his relations with people."

It was an arrogance, a grossness, that extended far beyond his immediate social circle, even to the scornful dismissal of far greater writers. Dickens, he claimed, was an inferior novelist to Disraeli, a perfumed poseur Wilde found much closer to his own tastes and, arguably, to his own lower level of talent. Whitman, Longfellow, Eliot, Thackeray and Meredith were all found wanting by the author of the flimsy, over-decorated parable of Dorian Gray.

Perhaps it is fitting that the man who found Little Nell's death scene in *The Old Curiosity Shop* so amusing died an even more squalid, melodramatic death in a cheap Paris hotel room. He claimed that his life had been his art; both ended as botched jobs.

Having said all of which, this reviewer must add that Professor Ellmann succeeded in capturing his subject's genuine good qualities when not claiming undeserved ones. Wilde was a generous man whose socialism was nothing more profound or serious than a chronic overspender's desire to share other people's wealth. He seldom intentionally hurt others, although his thoughtless indulgence brought much suffering on his wife, children, and friends who did not share his peculiarities.

He could also be genuinely good company, and, in the last analysis, was far more the victim than the predator in most of his sordid dalliances. If his pretenses had been fewer, and his hobby had been philately rather than fellatio, he might have lived out a quiet old age as a competent, colorful critic and writer of light theatre pieces. Instead, he overreached himself, as does his latest biographer, taken in, like so many others, by the gas and gossamer of an output that was more artfulness than art. □

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POLITICAL PASSAGES: JOURNEYS OF CHANGE THROUGH TWO DECADES, 1968-1988

Edited by John H. Bunzel/The Free Press/$21.95

Joseph Shattan

Every once in a while, I am prone to second thoughts: maybe I overreacted to the sixties; maybe my deep and abiding hatred of the New Left, the counterculture, and the age of Aquarius in all its sordid and pretentious rottenness derives not from objective reality, but from what my wife is pleased to call my "authoritarian personality"; maybe the historian of the future, disinterested and wise, will judge the sixties more kindly and justly than I can ever aspire to.

When next I am assailed by these mellow reconsiderations, I know exactly what I will do. I will reach for my copy of *Political Passages*, the splendid collection of autobiographical essays edited by Hoover Institution fellow John Bunzel, and open it to Bunzel's own account of his ordeal as a professor at San Francisco State University during the sixties. Professor Bunzel was a liberal; more, he was a "collectivistic liberal" who believed that the principal duty of government is to promote greater equality. But far from shielding him against attack, it was Bunzel's very liberalism, his egalitarianism and activism, that made him a prime target of radical thuggery. Reading about the outrages to which Bunzel was subjected is enough to rekindle my old ferocity against the New Left, and I feel a rush of sympathy for the aging Karl Marx, who, when informed by H. M. Hyndman that he (Hyndman) had grown more tolerant with advancing age, scornfully replied, "Have you? Have you?" (It was also Marx who said that history repeats itself first as tragedy, then as farce—which seems like a good way of distinguishing between the Old Left and the New.)

Bunzel's essay is one of the twelve contributions by men and women of varied ages and temperaments who were all either liberal, progressive, or far left in their politics during the sixties and seventies, and who have since changed their minds. Bunzel asked each of his contributors—many of whose names will be familiar to readers of this journal—to explain what drew them leftwards in the first place, and how they ultimately came to their current positions. Bunzel's intent, I believe, was simply to provide a personalized chronicle of a dark and troubled chapter in American history. But the result is not just another more or less interesting group portrait. On the contrary, the responses Bunzel got, along with an extraordinarily perceptive introductory essay by the redoubtable Edward Shils, constitute the most effective indictment of the politics and culture of the sixties (actually, of the period between 1965, when the Free Speech Movement began at Berkeley, and 1974, when Richard Nixon resigned from the presidency in the wake of Watergate) that I know of.

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Consider, for starters, the claim which was repeated *ad nauseam* throughout this period—and is still heard even today—that the youthful protesters of the sixties were the most idealistic generation America has ever produced. Peter Collier, a former editor of the influential New Left journal *Ramparts* makes short shrift of this moonshine: "Most of the radicals I knew were, at least by the middle of their journey, confirmed cynics. . . . They never really believed in anything. Certainly by the end of the decade their commitment was negative: they were *against* patriotic commitment; they hated the *idea* of America. What we called politics in the sixties was exactly what Lewis Feuer and many of our political elders tried to say it was before we shouted them down—an Oedipal revolt on a grand scale; a no-fault acting out."

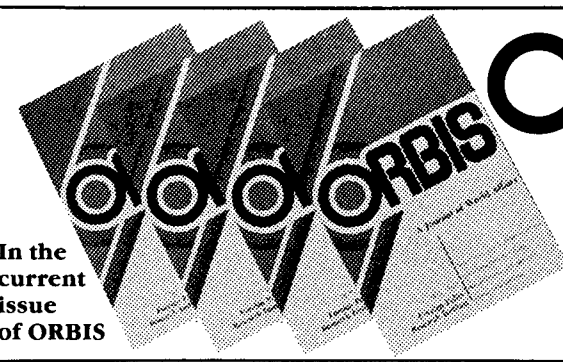
This Oedipal revolt was carried on, of course, in the name of liberation, both personal and political. But as Martha Bayles, now a columnist for the *Wall Street Journal*, rightly points out, for her and many of her coevals the sixties was a time of wrenching uncertainty and inner turmoil. "There I was," she writes of her New Left days, "a young woman in emotional and cultural free fall." But sympathetic adults (oh, how I despised those endlessly sympathetic adults!), instead of providing her with the authority she so desperately—if unconsciously—sought, "mistook my plummeting for free flight," and urged her on.

Still, Miss Bayles was luckier than many. She eventually found a model of legitimate authority in a conservative rural community of Southern blacks. Other leftists, not so lucky, found their role-models in a criminal organization like the Black Panthers, in a ruthless Stalinist like Ho Chi Minh, or in a political psychopath like Fidel Castro.

Next to "idealism," the most overworked cliché of the sixties was "authenticity." Authenticity entailed casting off the trammels of conventional bourgeois society and getting in touch with your true Self. The opposite of "authenticity" was "false consciousness," and the way you escaped from the hell of the latter to the bliss of the former was by getting your consciousness "raised" through the "Movement." The irony of all this was that the people who prattled most about authenticity were the least authentic of human beings, the ones most urgently in need of "consciousness raising."

This comes through time and again in these essays. Carol Iannone, a writer and editor who went through the full catastrophe—radicalism, feminism, even orgone therapy— puts it this way: "What the sixties were to become for me, though I did not recognize it at first, was an intense internal struggle to possess my own soul against the traps of pseudothought." This is the best description of what the struggle for authenticity really means that I have ever come across—and, as Miss Iannone makes clear, it was a lonely struggle that she had to wage *against* the New Left.

The eminent philosopher and social critic, Michael Novak, makes the same point somewhat differently. "Underneath this questioning . . . of my own left-wing presuppositions," he writes, "lay a pursuit of self-knowledge, a drive to be faithful to my family and my roots, to be myself"—in short, to become authentic. And Julius Lester, one-time buddy of Stokely Carmichael,



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makes the following revealing comment about the essays he wrote as a columnist for the New Leftist *Guardian*: "The voice of those essays is not authentically mine."

Once the denizens of the New Left had finally made the breakthrough into freedom and authenticity, they experienced a sense of rebirth, of viewing the world through a new pair of eyes, that seems not unlike a religious conversion. As Joseph Epstein puts it, "As a writer, someone primarily interested in understanding and not changing the world, I found removing the furry blinders worn through my left-wing youth an immense aid . . . the world seems a livelier, a brighter, an altogether more interesting place." David Horowitz, another former *Ramparts* editor, echoes Epstein's sense of newly found freedom. "The biggest change in me," he writes, "is not any new political conclusions I may have. It is a new way of looking at things." The real way to attain a higher state of consciousness, it turns out, is by knocking the left's ideological stuffing out of one's head and (to borrow a phrase from non-contributor Werner Dannhauser) "becoming naive again."

How did the contributors to *Political Passages* accomplish this transition to naiveté? For many of them, concern for their families played a key role. "If I had been twenty-six, unmarried, without responsibilities, I might have loved every moment of the vaunted sixties culture," writes Joseph Epstein. "But not my age but having two stepsons in their teens made this impossible. To have teenage children in one's charge during those years gave a whole new, sour perspective on the age of Aquarius." Similarly, it was his family which made Peter Collier "draw back from the radical brink." And when Julius Lester, a black writer, is advised by friends to leave his wife because she is white, and his children because they are half-white, his deradicalization begins. "I will die," he says, "before my 'consciousness' is 'raised' to the place where I consider these children sins to be repented." In general, it seems, family responsibilities and loyalties tend to temper ideological enthusiasms, which may help to explain why the Catholic clergy is currently much more radical than the laity.

Today, none of the contributors to Bunzel's volume regard themselves as part of the left anymore. But while they have all gotten off the train by now, not all of them have disembarked at exactly the same station. John Bunzel still thinks of himself as a liberal, albeit a conservative liberal who "cares as much for freedom as I do about equality." David Horowitz is now a "conservative"—someone who respects the "accumulated wisdom of human tradition" and distrusts mere reason. Michael Novak considers himself a Whig, which is his way of identifying with a political tradition that is at once conservative and progressive. Julius Lester shuns all labels—and as a recent black convert to Judaism, he does indeed seem *sui generis*. And Joseph Epstein must surely be a neocon—what else could a regular *Commentary* contributor possibly be? Yet what all these individuals have in common is a commitment to democracy, civility, and—for lack of a better word—normality. These are not earthshaking values, I grant you, but good, solid fare—just what is needed after a long and perilous journey through the wilderness. □

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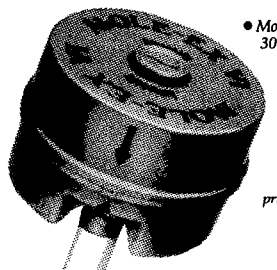

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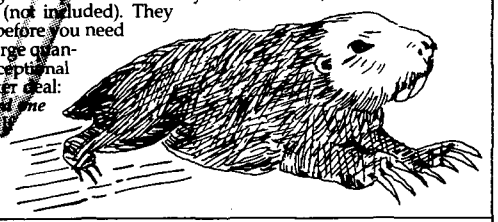

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CITIZEN COHN
Nicholas von Hoffman/Doubleday/$19.95

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF ROY COHN
Sidney Zion/Lyle Stuart/$18.95

Victor Gold

Memorandum to:
R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.
Editor-in-Chief, TAS
From: Vic Gold
Re: The Cohn Books

Sorry, Bob, but you'll have to find another reviewer to do justice to the Cohn books, because I hit the wall with a hundred-or-so pages left in *Citizen Cohn*—to be precise, at pages 364-65, the place where Dr. Herb Smokler goes into detail about how "Roy has a case of venereal warts on his anus" and was being treated with podophyllin; which medication, Smokler informs us, is "very irritating and . . . quite uncomfortable."

Enough already. Not to be prudish, only that I've tried with the passage of years to be more selective in my reading, and Roy Cohn's anal miseries, to be perfectly frank, are of less interest to me than they might be to some serious student of twentieth-century American history from, say, the Gore Vidal school of contemporary literature. So I shut the book, bottom of page 364, prepared to call the project quits (having already given up on Sidney Zion's gaseous "autobiography" of Cohn which, after three chapters of rancid narcissism, started to give *me* a pain in the ass).

It was at that point, however, that my daughter—the theatrical one, Paige—entered the picture, insisting that I finish the assignment, if only in the manner of the theater critic who walks out on a play but reviews it anyway, as in: "This production is so squalid I left at intermission."

Hmmm . . . Maybe she had something. In any case, my instinct to finish whatever I start having been twinged, I returned to von Hoffman, pursuing the tale of Roy Cohn's rectal discomfort, i.e., Smokler's description of a scene in a limousine going from Houston to Galveston, with Cohn in the front seat "having a very involuted legal conversation, but if you looked at him carefully, leaning over the back seat, his pants and underwear were down to his knees and his anus was addressed to the aperture of the air conditioner."

Oh, that Roy. A sweet piece of work, as they say in south Texas.

Smokler's story, understand, came ten pages after one told by Jay Topkis, a Manhattan lawyer who filed suit against Fifth Avenue Coach, one of Cohn's clients. In the limousine we saw Roy at play. Here we find Roy at work:

> Topkis recollected that he didn't believe his client had too strong a case and was disposed to settle for a dime on the dollar [writes von Hoffman], but when the suit was called up in court Roy didn't appear and didn't send an excuse. The hearing was held over a week and called again, but again no Roy, no defense, but this time a default judgment was entered, meaning that Topkis's client got the full amount of his claim. Roy was a pre-eminent legal no-show.

Also, as von Hoffman's book portrays him, a pre-eminent deadbeat, shyster, liar, and cheat. Is the portrait accurate? I don't know Smokler, but I do know something of Jay Topkis and seriously doubt that von Hoffman, whatever his personal bias against Cohn, concocted these stories. His interviews—including some with Cohn's friends—have the ring of verisimilitude; which is to say, if Cohn were alive he'd sue and, barring his putting the fix on the judge, lose.

So where do we go from here? As I told you on taking this assignment, I was never much of a Roy Cohn fan, not sharing the opinion held by some of our mutual conservative acquaintances that Cohn, despite his pornographic lifestyle, had certain socially redeeming qualities, e.g., he loved his mother, once got Alan Dershowitz into Studio 54, and prided himself on loyalty to friends (whom he occasionally

Victor Gold is The American Spectator*'s national correspondent.*

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stiffed on money matters; but after all, what are friends for?). On a larger scale, he was a liberal *bête noire*, high on Robert Kennedy's hate list.

But having said that, I remember Cohn best for reducing anti-Communism to its lowest common denominator, i.e., trying to keep his buddy David Schine out of the Army and, in the process, giving the liberals the ammunition to bring his boss, Joe McCarthy, down. Nor can I forget that Cohn's "conservatism" became full-blown only after Nixon and Reagan went to the White House; that in 1964, when conservatives were in the trenches with Barry Goldwater, our good friend Roy was front-running with Lyndon Johnson.

All of the above is simply for the record. My real point in writing this memo is simply to say that, my daughter's advice to the contrary, I'm bailing out on both the von Hoffman and Zion reviews. Unlike theater critics, book reviewers can't do the I-left-at-intermission bit, because books are different from plays: the reviewer is expected to plow on, to the bitter podophyllinized end.

No can do. Two books on Roy Cohn, warts and all, is two too many. □

AMBASSADOR IN PARIS: THE REAGAN YEARS
Evan Galbraith/Regnery Gateway/$16.95

Ernest van den Haag

In the past—without telephones and jet planes—ambassadors were important in diplomatic negotiations. Their principals needed to be represented abroad by plenipotentiaries. Today the principals find it easier to negotiate directly with one another by telephone or in person. Ambassadors were important too in informing their governments about what was going on in the country to which they had been sent. Today an embassy is at best one of many sources of such information, competing with newspapers, TV, and official travelers of all kinds.

Are embassies obsolete then? Not quite. They help to overcome the obstacles governments put in one another's way. Governments often make trade and travel difficult and embassies help travelers and businessmen. Further, in closed societies, embassies still are of importance as contacts with the government. Above all, in free societies, embassies have become the major public relations centers for their home countries and the policies they pursue.

Not all our ambassadors have fully understood, or are able to accomplish, their new task. Evan Galbraith, our ambassador to France 1981-86, has. He came to the job magnificently equipped. Having lived in Paris as an international banker, he spoke French well (for an American). In France, justly proud of its language, this is particularly important. Indeed it is important everywhere to send someone who speaks the language of the country to which he is ambassador. This may not be easy with respect to Afghanistan—although more efforts could be made. But France? Surely there are enough qualified persons in America who speak French. Yet unfortunately, Evan Galbraith was the exception rather than the rule. The French appreciated his knowledge of their language and his love of their civilization; and he used his gifts fully in the service of his country.

Galbraith understood early on that his real task was not to sit in the embassy reading the cable traffic, too voluminous anyway to be read by anyone (it hardly ever is), and add to it. Much of this traffic is of importance only to bureaucrats who want to make a record. American embassies are expected to report on everything (all by cable): "economics, finance, agriculture, military affairs, politics, science . . . transportation . . . drugs, crime, labor." It never seems to have occurred to the State Department that most of the cabled information, difficult as it was to procure in the eighteenth century, is now readily available from public sources, and much of it is not needed. Soviet embassies are not overstaffed, since they are used for much spying. Ours, so used by the CIA only to a minor degree, are overstaffed. True, the personnel barely suffices for what they do. But much of what they do need not be done by the embassy.

But Galbraith did grasp the truly important job of a modern ambassador. I doubt that the U.S. has had a more persuasive and diligent representative in Paris since Benjamin Franklin. And Ben only had to impress and persuade the Court. Galbraith traveled all over, gave speeches like a candidate for election, and appeared on television. He worked hard and produced results. America is better known and liked in France because of his efforts.

Galbraith was confronted with a difficult situation. When he arrived, France had a socialist-led government that included Communists, who did what they could to make the life of the American ambassador difficult and to hinder his mission. Later France acquired a government of a socialist president "cohabitating" with a conservative cabinet. Neither was above trying to use policy toward America and the American embassy for purposes of domestic political advantage. Some diplomacy was needed indeed to avert damage to American interests. Galbraith managed to avoid it.

His book clearly suggests that Galbraith's interests were not limited by his public relations activity. There are substantial analyses of French and American foreign policy and of the sources that produce it. All of it is well written, but the diary part—a cross between Eleanor Roosevelt's *My Day* and William F. Buckley, Jr.'s published diaries—is most fascinating. Neither as tedious as the former, nor quite as witty as the latter, the ambassador's diary entries are informative, lively, and often revealing. His style is easygoing and he has no trouble making his ambassadorial life interesting. It was. I wish he had had more careful editors: there is no word "appendixes" in any language; and there are some other lapses. They do not detract, however, from the readability of his informative book replete of "instruction and amusement alike." □

Ernest van den Haag is the John M. Olin Professor of Jurisprudence and Public Policy at Fordham University.

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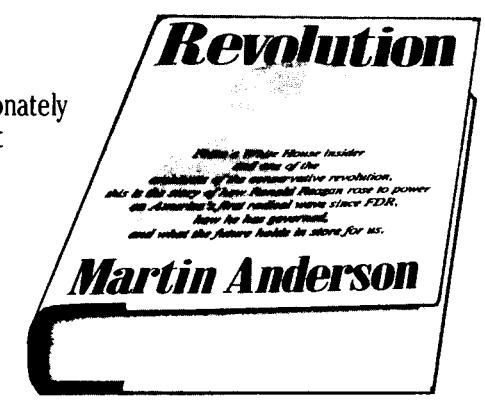

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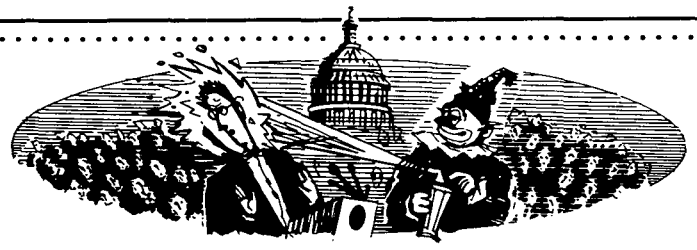
THE WASHINGTON SPECTATOR



Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines, wrote Shakespeare, although we all know it's not so much the eye of heaven as the humidity. After an uncertain spring of random showers and backsliding cold spells, Summer chose the week of Memorial Day finally to enfold Washington in its sweaty embrace. More than an embrace: it's a death clutch, and Washingtonians thrash dumbly in attempts to give it the slip. Hundreds of thousands, according to the newspapers, head to the beaches of the Eastern Shore in search of soothing littoral breezes, and find themselves instead beneath the unblinking eye in a traffic jam on the Chesapeake Bay bridge; a smaller number, though in their way no less romantic, fly off to temperate Moscow, for palaver—leading to what, nobody knows. Some drive deep into the Blue Ridge to mountain retreats, there to be harassed by shotgun-toting gangs of moonshiners aflame with perverted desires.

• • •

Those of us who remain behind—those of us, for example, who have seen *Deliverance*—have our own methods of coping: there is the surrender and resignation of sun bathing, or the opium pipe of a televised ball game watched in a darkened, air-cooled room, or the companionship of steady drinking in a drafty saloon. Some methods work better than others; and some of these too can backfire, with horrible consequence. A word to the wise in such matters should be sufficient. It was the heat of one Washington summer afternoon, historians warn, that induced President Zachary Taylor to seek remedy by "consuming an excessive quantity of cucumbers, washed down with copious drafts of iced milk." Within seventy-two hours he was dead.

• • •

The horrible consequence being, in this case, Millard Fillmore. Other remedies will have other consequences, also unforeseen. On the Friday before Memorial Day, as Summer pressed down on the city like a damp blanket, the Senate escaped the heat by burrowing deep into its chamber and voting at last on the INF treaty. President Reagan was in Helsinki, waiting to fly to Moscow. Howard Baker, also waiting to fly to Moscow, remained in Washington, hoping to bring the approved treaty with him. At the Capitol a White House aide remarked, "Air Force Two is sitting on the runway out there at Andrews [Air Force base], with the motor running, just waiting for Howard to get aboard with the treaty." The Senate hustled, as the world now knows, and didn't disappoint Howard.

• • •

I arrived at the Capitol early Friday morning to watch the final day of what we insiders call "the ratification process." There had been a minor breach in senatorial decorum the evening before—Majority Leader Robert Byrd, angry that Jesse Helms insisted on bringing up various "crippling amendments" to the treaty, had sent the senators home early—and I hoped, if not for a resumption of hostilities, at least for a tense moment or two. A few minutes before ten, I walked with some other reporters onto the Senate floor and waited by Senator Byrd's desk for the "dugout," the majority leader's pre-session briefing to give the press an idea of the strategy he hopes to follow in maneuvering a bill through whatever process (legislative, ratification, nomination, deliberation—so many processes, so little time) presents itself. A few senators were already in the chamber, which, since the intrusion of C-SPAN, is now as brilliantly lit as a movie set. Senator William Proxmire, a notorious early-riser, wandered about, talking in a loud voice and casting an occasional glance to the gallery to see if he was being noticed. Proxmire's shtick as the crotchety-but-lovable eccentric, which at one time made him the object of an adoring press, has been wearing thin over the last several years; it is now mostly considered a petty annoyance. (This may have something to do with his decision not to seek re-election.) Also wearing thin, incidentally, is Proxmire's celebrated hair transplant from several years ago: the crop has degenerated to the point where he has had to opt for a poor modification of the George McGovern rope-throw, a style first popularized by the Sage of South Dakota in which the hair above the left ear is allowed to grow long enough to be tossed sideways across the pate, giving the illusion of a bale of pampas grass scattered over a sheet of ice.

• • •

Under the circumstances, what resentments must poor Bill Proxmire harbor against his majority leader? Here is a man who will never need resort to tonsorial wizardry. Senator Byrd's cockatoo-sweep of silver-blue hair is his most magisterial feature. On this historic Friday he had chosen from his wardrobe a synthetic seersucker and a tie of pale-blue stripes; watching him enter the Senate chamber one instinctively checked (in vain, as it turned out) for the tell-tale white shoes and matching belt. In his demeanor no trace of the rancor from the night before remained. "Hello, everybody!" he called to the hacks gathered around his desk. "Today is treaty day!" Without prodding from the reporters he proceeded to outline the day's business. "I'm confident that, with a little help from the other side in tackling this thing, we can finish today." Out at Andrews, remember, the motor was running. Byrd outlined other legislative business, and then interjected some comments about Manuel Noriega, whose protracted negotiations with the State Department had broken off the day before. "I've been urging the Administration to Latinize this matter all along, and go the diplomatic route, so we can avoid any recourse to military action." Did that mean Senator Byrd would countenance military action against the Panamanian slimeball? "Let's not cross that bridge till"—he paused and backpedaled—"Let's not roll up our britches till we cross that creek [crick]." We hacks laughed and Byrd smiled, happy to have brought an endearing bit of West Virginia, however canned, into this august chamber.

• • •

After the dugout I went back up to the press gallery and resolved to watch the entire treaty day process. Readying itself for a session of complicated legislative activity, the Senate resembles nothing so much as a dress rehearsal for a high school variety show, with Senator Byrd as the slightly addled faculty adviser. In place of a clipboard, the majority leader uses a scrap of paper on which he jots down the order of business, as the senators chat among themselves or make demands on his attention. When he needs a moment to collect his thoughts or clarify a request, he signals for one of his allies to begin talking for the record—with the C-SPAN cameras rolling, the show must go on. For that reason Senator Patrick Leahy began killing time by giving a little lesson on English usage. "Mr. President," Leahy said, as Byrd and Bob Dole sorted out some bit of business, "my seventeen-year-old son, still in school, has been reminding me, apropos of what's happening here today, that the Senate does not *ratify* the treaty. It *advises* and *consents* to the treaty." Leahy shot his cuffs, greatly enjoying his unlikely role as the H. W. Fowler of the Upper Chamber. "The *President* ratifies the treaty," he continued. "It will be ratified next week in Moscow, with, I'm sure, a full panoply of fanfare." With outstretched arms he made an expansive gesture to indicate the fullness of the panoply.

• • •

I didn't stay much longer after that. The Senate had settled into one of its long stretches of collegiality—no more fireworks—and the truth is that senatorial collegiality can be a snooze. And troubling, too. The final vote on the treaty was 93 to 5. "As the vote was announced to the hushed chamber," wrote Helen Dewar in the *Post*, "the public gallery burst into rare applause. . . . Then, in the almost family way that the Senate operates even at momentous events, [senators] posed for photographs . . ." "In the family way": it is a phrase pregnant with meaning. The Senate isn't a family, and when *tout le* Washington unites behind a single project, as it has with INF, something's amiss. Summer couldn't have come at a more opportune time: for along with the bay bridge traffic jams and the tanning oil, the cucumbers and iced milk, Summer means congressional recess, and recess means the senators disperse, before too much damage can be done.

—AF

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man," nor is he (solely) a "diplomat." These this-world categorizations neither define nor circumscribe the mysterious dimension of his office, which has been divinely appointed. In obedience to that office, he cannot, must not, the existential nexus regardless, at any time fudge truth. The truth is that British society in 1940 was corrupt, and is more corrupt today. For the same reasons. And so is ours, for cognate reasons. And had the occasion for pointing this out arrived at an hour of apparent peril for the U.S., nonetheless would it be the Pope's solemn duty to point it out. It may be the peacenik's cliche to acknowledge that our greatest existential peril stems not from the USSR, but from the corruptions within our society. It is no less true.

Regarding Mr. McCaffrey's letter: he seems to miss the point that Adam Smith wrote so adamantly to affirm, namely, that economics is all about morality. A society's system of economics is a reflection of its central moral assumptions. (Reflect on how uncannily mercantilism reflected the political assumptions of its time.) I personally most fervently wish one could divorce our American species of capitalism from the economic determinism out of which it evolved . . . but I don't see how that philosophical finesse can be pulled off. The valiant tries by Gilder and Novak finally do not convince—at least me. One would like to practice the fruitful mechanisms of free enterprise, with all the sociological and philosophical goods that the system implies (freedom of choice, respect for property, etc.) *sans* its central operating dynamic (selfish materialism), with all the sociological and philosophical evils that this implies ("consumerism," the yuppyesque Me society, etc.) But how? Pope John does not tell us. The theoretical vacuum remains to be filled. As individuals, however, we may attempt a clumsy spanning of the gulf by conducting our personal lives and business dealings as far as possible according to the Sermon on the Mount. That is, by using the mechanisms while personally rejecting the dynamic.

Finally, regarding Mr. Hyman's letter: he slips into—it seems to me—the fallacy of the false dilemma. He says, in effect, that if one holds that the Pope's encyclical can only be understood as otherworldly, then its criticisms of our temporal economic system are irrelevant. But the dilemma does not hold: precisely is the follower of Christ asked to bear in this world, in his mundane dealings and private existence, the near impossible burden of his transcendental destiny. Our incredible mission is to subdue nature—to turn it (our base natural inclinations; the sociological "laws" that derive from them) on its head. Christ enjoins us to be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect. That yoke may be sweet, but in this corrupt age, to which we belong, and by which our sensibilities have been degraded, it is hardly light.

By insisting on the priority of this burden, however, Pope John avoids the error lamented by Mr. Hyman: too many religious leaders, Catholic and Protestant, indeed "have modified Christianity so as to have Christ's kingdom embrace this world as well as the next world," which is truly, and profoundly, and irrevocably, catastrophically, to render the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ irrelevant. By reducing Christianity to another sociology, the awful meaning of the Incarnation and the obligations consequent on our redemption from sin are made frivolous. Christian critics of *Sollicitudo* for some reason resist applying to the encyclical what is implicit in the surrender of will that constitutes the act of faith: our acknowledgment that reality resides in congruence with the Holy Spirit, from Whom it flows, by Whom alone is it sustained. The only acceptable course is to conduct ourselves in this world, and fashion the mainsprings of our society here, in accordance with the desires of the Holy Spirit—" . . . thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Any interpretation of reality as possible in opposition to the desires of the Creator is a distortion, a risible pretension, a corruption, and a phantasmagoria, in consequence of which, moreover, as Pope John Paul points out in *Sollicitudo*, unhappiness and injustice will always persist. It boils down to the concept of sin. The transcendent reality (Truth) must take precedence over the contingent temporal form of that reality (Error) in order that true freedom and true happiness of the human spirit flourish. To the Christian, there is no dilemma. Because there is the one reality alone.

Podhoretz Is Wrong

There is an unfortunate implication in John Podhoretz's satirical review of Hedrick Smith's *The Power Game* (*TAS*, June 1988). The review implies that Smith used my ideas about the role of congressional staff without complete attribution. I thought the credit Smith gave my work was quite generous.

—Michael J. Malbin
Silver Spring, Maryland

John Podhoretz is absolutely correct ("The American Musical's Last Hope," *TAS*, March 1988) when he states that "jazz enthusiasts will disagree" with his assertion that the likes of Irving Berlin and George Gershwin "created the first really distinctive popular American art." And his proof for this astounding claim is, "They used bits and pieces of previous musical styles to create a new kind of song, a brassy, melodic, short, and memorable piece that was" characteristic of the nation.

Without going into a long historical or philosophical discussion of jazz (the word "jazz" is used here as a generic term), I will simply state that (maybe for the first time in his life) Podhoretz is wrong! Berlin and Gershwin, among a lot of others, developed what has become known as the American song directly from the jazz idiom. Early jazz grew from a combination of musical forms and dances popular in America during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, including the waltz, mazurka, schottische, and march welded together by a strong, straight-four African-derived rhythm. The form was adapted by the Tin Pan Alley boys—the Gershwins and Berlins—and spoon-fed to the American public via live performances on Broadway, in music halls sheet music, the piano roll, the phonograph record and eventually, motion pictures and other media.

This is not to denigrate the work of these songwriters. The two Mr. Podhoretz mentions were certainly talented musicians who deserve all the accolades they've received. And so were Cole Porter, W.C. Handy, Lerner and Loewe, Duke Ellington, Fletcher Henderson, Rodgers and Hart, Hoagy Carmichael, Fats Waller, and many, many more. The point is, however, they did not *create* "a distinctive American art." They worked within the evolving jazz form. And, I hasten to add, the better writers were very important to its development.

On another note, however, at a certain point the popular American song simply ran its course. The development of new jazz forms surfaced in part because the song form—eight bar line/eight bar bridge/eight bar line, or AABA—had lost its vitality to support real creative effort. There was no more in it. After all, this 32-bar form reigned supreme in America from 1910 to the mid-1950s. That may not span a longer period of time than the popularity of the German Lied of Europe during the nineteenth century, but considering advances in communications and the music's rapid introduction to a massive audience, the length of time the American song held center stage was respectable, indeed!

Herein also probably lies the demise of the Broadway musical comedy which Mr. Podhoretz laments. The newer jazz forms are too sophisticated to be adapted to a light evening's entertainment, but are there for the serious listener to savor.

John Podhoretz should stick to political commentary. I usually agree with him in that context. But his article, "The American Musical's Last Hope," is more a nostalgic plea for the good old days on Broadway than a serious commentary on either American music, or the American musical.

—Lawrence D. Skutch
Westport, Connecticut

Twits

Having just returned to Britain from a most enjoyable and informative visit to colleges and schools in the U. S., may I presume to comment upon the article "The Social Studies Debacle" by Chester E. Finn, Jr. in your May issue?

If it is any consolation, we, too, in Britain, despair at the poor level of knowledge of so many of our children of the world about them and the history and culture of which they are a part. That said, I have to say I was struck by the extraordinary degree of what I took to be isolationism in the American youngsters that I spoke to. Not only did they not know where other countries of the world were, or what they were like, but they seemed to have an attitude that they did not need to know. Some even seemed to think that they did not need to know much about the rest of the United States apart from the little bit they were living in. As for history, it seemed to me that there was none, or hardly any, and again an attitude which suggested that the history of Europe or Africa or wherever was irrelevant to those living in the United States.

Certainly one would like to see "History" and "Geography" return to American schools as free-standing subjects in the curriculum, taught with intellectual rigor, but I question Chester Finn as to whether such can be achieved by diktat from the top, whether federal or state curriculum. Is not the present problem largely because the curriculum has been dictated in the past by so-called educational experts who have not taught a live child in twenty years or more? Rather than bureaucracy and politicians attempting to set the curriculum, and by all means exalt teachers and parents of the benefits for their children of teaching good English, Mathematics, History, Geography, and so on, is it not better to leave the decision to the schools, responding to the wishes and needs of the parents and their children?

In Britain the government are attempting to dictate the content of the school curriculum by legislation; many of us think such is a very unwise move, and one doomed to failure. Better leave the content of education to the "market" of supply by the teachers and demand by the pupils and their parents.

—Stuart Sexton
Director, Education Unit
Institute of Economic Affairs
London, England

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CURRENT WISDOM

The Great Books Series

Proof that it didn't start with Nancy:

Daddy was not a superstitious man but he believed in fortune-tellers when it came to finding a lost bird dog. . . . One time Daddy took me with him to see a large black woman who lived alongside a country road with some brightly painted crescent moons, stars and an enormous human hand tacked to the trees in front of her house. . . . I remember that she made us wait for a while before she would see us, which was a strange experience in itself for white people in a black woman's yard. When finally my father was invited in, I slipped in the door behind him. . . . The fortune-teller, by her comments, seemed to identify the dog. After asking several questions, she said, "Mr. Earl, you ain't never gonna see that dog ag'in."

He paid her a dollar, and we left. We rode in silence for a while, and then Daddy said, "I expect she's right."

She was.

[From An Outdoor Journal, *by Jimmy Carter, Bantam Books, $18.95]*

Austin Chronicle

Another dithyramb for Jesse Jackson, this time from the political editor of the venerated *Austin Chronicle*:

The anger you just feel. In your gut. Souring your system with the knowledge that you know something is going on here and you know all too well what it is. But it is painful to face up to it. And, besides, what can you do about an empire in twilight? If you care, you recognize that these are not the times to stay the middling course. Bold action, radical thinking, genuine compassion, that is what is demanded of us.

Of the Democratic candidates running for president, only Jesse Jackson chooses that course. Certainly, there are myriad troublesome aspects to the thought of a Jackson presidency, but none as troublesome as the limp alternatives of "moderation" proffered by the other candidates.

As the tireless champion of the poor and minorities and disenfranchised, Jackson is the conscience of the presidential contest, the poet of the dispossessed, a man who makes common sense seem subversive. . . .

Jesse Jackson is the voice of the voiceless, the articulator of the dying hopes of desperate urban blacks, distressed family farmers, unemployed union workers, his is the eloquence of the hip-hop nation, that anxious, wounded, dreaming amalgam of ragtag people, a hoi polloi of democracy lip serviced literally to death. In a perfect world, Jesse Jackson may not be the candidate of choice. But in this imperfect world, with the brutal choices it offers us, Jackson is the candidate of necessity.

[February 26, 1988]

In These Times

The journal of the yuppie revolutionaries unveils a new clod *philosophe* preparing the way to a still greater future:

Astrid Lindgren, creator of Pippi Longstocking, has long supported animal rights. Several years ago the Swedish children's author campaigned against artificial insemination on the grounds it deprived cows of a normal sex life. Her efforts have since culminated in an animal protection law that Sweden's parliament is soon expected to pass. The legislation is based on the belief that husbandry technology should be adapted to the animal and not vice versa. The Swedish Embassy's Irene Noby told *In These Times* that the bill of animal rights includes these sections: "Docking of dogs' tails shall be forbidden"; "Cattle shall have the right to graze outdoors"; "Hens shall be let out of cramped cages (which fail to meet their basic needs)"; "Sows will be freed from farrowing pens (and provided separate feeding, sleeping and toilet areas)." It looks like pigs in Sweden will soon be enjoying a higher standard of living than the American homeless.

[March 23-30, 1988]

Interface
(New England's Center for the Fitness of Body, Mind, and Spirit)

The estimable Miss Margot Adler advertises her wares in an important catalogue of the goofball and the occult:

W2574 A Two-Day Workshop
Saturday and Sunday, July 23 and 24, 10am-6pm
Members: $98/Non-members: $112

This workshop for women only explores goddess spirituality and women's spiritual empowerment. It combines joyful exuberance with time for inner meditation. We will chant, share songs, and create several group rituals. We will create sacred space and take an inner journey to meet the goddess within ourselves. We will also explore the uses of ritual, ritual tools, and the workshop will attempt to demystify "magic" and all the trappings of ceremony. The workshop will also explore an assortment of techniques for individual and solitary work, as well as work that can be done in groups.

This will be a joyful two days. Please bring a musical instrument, particularly drums, rattles, tamborines [sic], flutes, and cymbals. We will create a group altar, so bring something to place on it. A resource guide to women's spirituality will also be provided.

Margot Adler is a reporter with National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" and "Morning Edition."

[Spring 1988]

Los Angeles Times

From the world of the arts, more inscrutable doings:

Noted stage and film actor Ian McKellen, 47, in Boston recently to accept an acting award, explained to the *Boston Globe* his recent decision to acknowledge his homosexuality and to work openly for gay and lesbian rights in his native England. Talking with a casting director, he asked if he would have a chance at a particular part if he were known to be gay: "She said, 'Why not?' And I said, 'What if the director knew?' And she said, 'So what? He's gay—and so is his wife.' That was when I knew I would have no more of this hypocrisy."

[April 26, 1988]

Clarion-Ledger
(Jackson, Mississippi)

A sonorous communiqué from another stupefying sap headed for the clergy:

Homosexuality has historically been condemned in our society, but in light of the Kinsey report, this means that our society refuses to deal openly with the bisexual urges that a full 90 percent of the human population experiences.

Thus homosexuals have been forced by society's non-acceptance to limit their activity largely to gay bars and other exclusively gay gatherings. But where does this leave a man or woman who lives in a small oppressive town in which there are no gay bars? It leaves them in the bathroom, or the state park, or some other area that becomes known throughout the community as the area for anonymous homosexual activity.

In the recent set of arrests, people who may have been guilty of exposing themselves in a public place were arrested. But the real guilt lies with those who have made and support laws, written and unwritten, that deny others (and themselves) the right to freely express their God-given sexuality.

These arrests will certainly not stop sexual encounters in public places, but what I hope they will trigger is an effort by the university to offer its rather substantial gay population an organization through which gay people can safely come together and know one another. Anything less will be just one more mark against Mississippi's chances of achieving the civil rights of its people.

—Keith Gore Wiseman
Columbia Theological Seminary
Decatur, Georgia
[March 10, 1988]

Commonweal

Leigh almost makes an intelligent distinction but recovers admirably. Felicitations, Leigh:

This morning I read in the *Washington Post* about two twenty-five-year-old Pakistanis who had been sentenced to death. Their crime was adultery. Their fate is to be buried up to their necks and stoned until they are dead.

This afternoon I read the excellent article about capital punishment by Richard Dieter. Here in the United States, the fate of the two thousand men, women, and children on death row is to be gassed, hanged, shot, electrocuted, or injected until they are dead. For a few moments I wondered if my job as Director of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty isn't kind of trivial. After all, we are certainly more civilized than the Pakistanis.

But are the two systems so different because of the way the condemned spend their last few minutes of life? Of course not.

—Leigh Dingerson
[April 22, 1988]

Crain's Chicago Business

The venerated *Crain's* of Chicago exalts he who incontestably is the best-suited vice presidential candidate available—for the Democrats:

Gov. Thompson is proposing a futile strategy to spur economic development: tax and spend. In arguing for a tax increase before the Chamber of Commerce of the Southern Suburbs the other day, the governor singled out Massachusetts and a couple of other states for special praise and declared, "What do (these states) have in common? Higher taxes than Illinois."

The governor was particularly enthusiastic about Michael Dukakis, whom he credited with engineering the "Massachusetts miracle," by which Mr. Thompson meant the media-enhanced story that Gov. Dukakis turned around Massachusetts' moribund economy and set it on the road to expansion in the 1980s.

[May 2, 1988]

Detroit Free Press

Dr. Gary Stollack heaves his incomparable verbal virtuosity into the cause of gender-free bliss:

Gary Stollack says forget Mother's Day. And while you're at it, forget Father's Day.

Instead, celebrate Care-Giver's Day and equality in child rearing.

Stollack, a psychology professor at Michigan State University, says having a separate Mother's Day and Father's Day perpetuates the myth that each parent has a different role.

With more parents sharing duties and more people other than parents giving care, all could be honored on one day, he says.

On Care-Giver's Day, people could thank neighbors, teachers, Cub Scout leaders, aunts, uncles or even psychology professors who deserve recognition.

"As far as I'm concerned, parenting, in a biological sense, ends when the sperm hits the egg," said Stollack.

[May 7, 1988]

Milwaukee Journal

One hundred twenty-five years after the Emancipation Proclamation and still prejudice grinds down the best of our idealists:

Madison, Wis. A man with a record of indecently exposing himself in laundromats and other indoor places may have been a victim of discrimination when denied county jobs as an outdoor laborer, a state official says.

Britton McKenzie, 41, who says he has an "addiction" to indecently exposing himself, applied for jobs in April 1987 as a laborer with the Dane County Parks Department and as a weed cutter with the county's Department of Public Works . . .

State law prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of criminal records unless an employer can show that an applicant's criminal record could have a bearing on the circumstances of the job. . . .

Judith Toole, an assistant county corporation counsel, argued that park laborers and weed cutters work "in constant view of the public which uses the parks and lakes for recreation during the summer." . . .

In a newspaper interview last year, McKenzie estimated he had exposed himself thousands of times.

[March 10, 1988]

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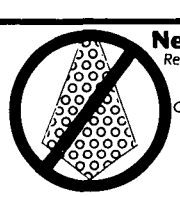

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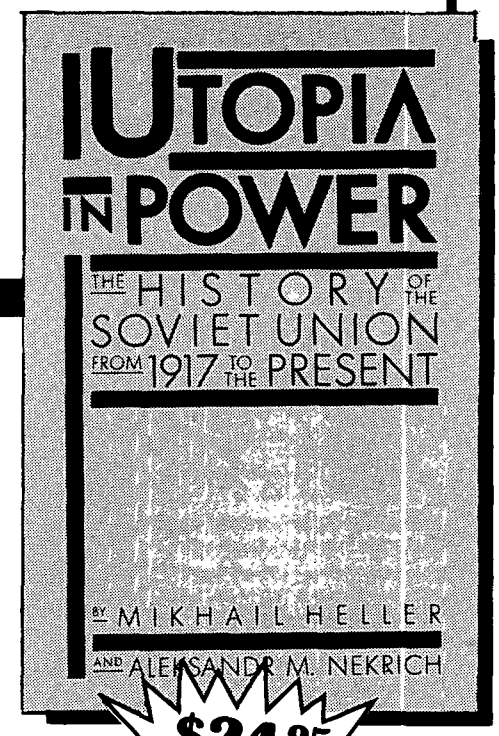

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